SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
The ATOM
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
NOV.
NO. 27
12¢
The PANTHER
WAS A COOL CAT OUT TO MAKE A KILLING --UNTIL
The ATOM
TURNED ON THE HEAT WITH HIS EXPLOSIVE FISTS!

"This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition, nor affixed to, nor as part of any advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever."

Printed in U.S.A.

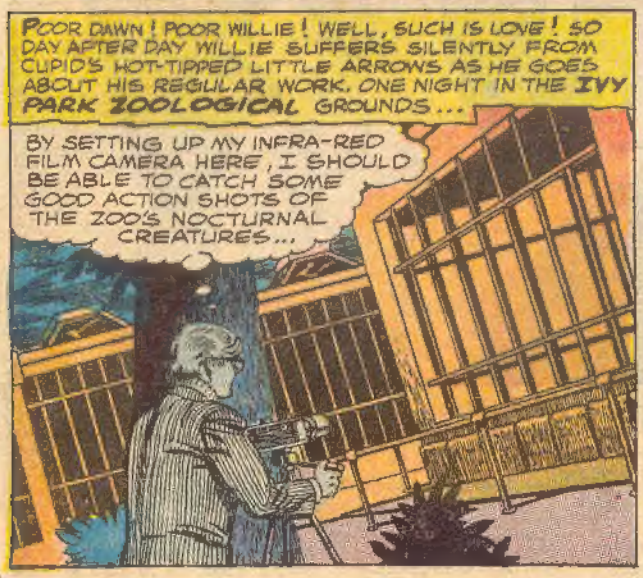
THE ATOM, No. 27, Oct.-Nov., 1966. Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 2nd & Dickey Sts., SPARTA, ILL. 62286. Editorial, Executive offices and Subscriptions, 575 LEXINGTON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Julius Schwartz, Editor. 2nd CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES under the act of Mar. 3, 1879. Yearly subscription in the U.S., 90¢ including postage. Foreign, $1.80 in American funds. Canada, $1.00 in American funds. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 205 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Copyright © National Periodical Publications, Inc., 1966. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred.

WELL, HERE IT IS SPRING! SO TAKE A GANDER AT THE PRETTY GIRL STROLLING ALONG AT SUNSET IN IVY TOWN PARK--AND IF YOUR HEART THUMPS ALONG WITH WILLIE FARR'S--THEN BROTHER, YOU'RE IN LOVE, TOO!..
PERFECT! THIS TELEPHOTO SHOT WILL WIN DAWN HUDSON THE BEAUTY CONTEST BID!

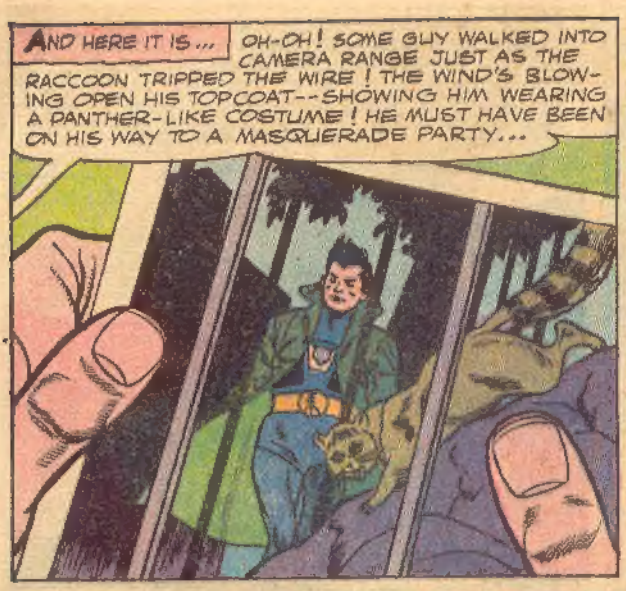
POOR WILLIE IS TOO SHY TO GO UP AND INTRODUCE HIMSELF! ALL HE CAN DO IS STARE AND...
HOW I LOVE HER! SIGH!

THIS LOVE BUG BITES MIGHTY HARD, ESPECIALLY ON WILLIE! YOU SEE, HE IS A FREE-LANCE PHOTOGRAPHER--AND A GOOD DEAL OF HIS FILM-MONEY GOES TO TAKE CANDID SHOTS OF DAWN...
NOW TO DEVELOP THE PHOTO AND SUBMIT IT TO THE BEAUTY CONTEST OFFICIALS! OH, THAT DAWN, SHE'S ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS!

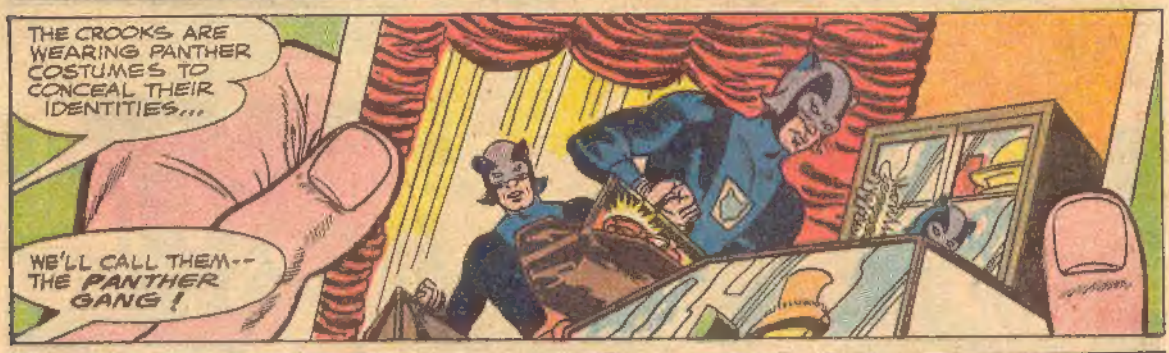
DAWN HUDSON--GORGEOUS? IT'S JUST AS WELL THAT WILLIE CAN'T SEE THE DAWN THAT WORKS AS SECRETARY TO AN IVY TOWN BUSINESS MAN...
I WISH I HAD DATES THE WAY THE OTHER GIRLS DO IN THIS OFFICE! ALL I EVER DO IS GO WALKING BY MY LONESOME IN THE PARK. I'M JUST TOO SHY TO TALK TO FELLOWS!


POOR DAWN! POOR WILLIE! WELL, SUCH IS LOVE! SO DAY AFTER DAY WILLIE SUFFERS SILENTLY FROM CUPID'S HOT-TIPPED LITTLE ARROWS AS HE GOES ABOUT HIS REGULAR WORK. ONE NIGHT IN THE IVY PARK ZOOLOGICAL GROUNDS...
BY SETTING UP MY INFRA-RED FILM CAMERA HERE, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO CATCH SOME GOOD ACTION SHOTS OF THE ZOO'S NOCTURNAL CREATURES...

THE IVY TOWN COURIER HAS COMMISSIONED ME TO DELIVER REAL-LIFE NATURE PHOTOS FOR ITS SUNDAY MAGAZINE SUPPLEMENT! RACCOONS, WEASELS, OPOSSUMS AND RING-TAILED CATS ALL ARE QUITE ACTIVE AT NIGHT...
WILLIE IS GOING TO GET A REAL COOL PICTURE, CATS!


AND HERE IT IS...
OH-OH! SOME GUY WALKED INTO CAMERA RANGE JUST AS THE RACCOON TRIPPED THE WIRE! THE WIND'S BLOWING OPEN HIS TOPCOAT--SHOWING HIM WEARING A PANTHER-LIKE COSTUME! HE MUST HAVE BEEN ON HIS WAY TO A MASQUERADE PARTY...

HEY! HEY! THE PLOT IS THICKENING! BECAUSE RIGHT AT THIS MOMENT, IN THE OFFICE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR OF THE IVY TOWN COURIER...
--AND THE JEWELRY STORE THAT WAS ROBBED LAST NIGHT HAD CAMERAS SET UP WITH INFRA-RED FILM TO CATCH ANY UNWARY THIEVES! THE POLICE HANDED OUT PICTURES FOR NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION--

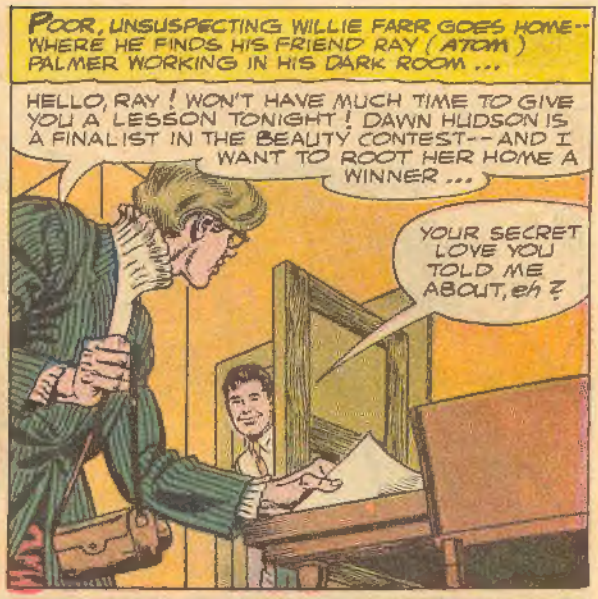

THE CROOKS ARE WEARING PANTHER COSTUMES TO CONCEAL THEIR IDENTITIES...
WE'LL CALL THEM--THE PANTHER GANG!

THEN A LITTLE LATER THIS SAME DAY, WHO WALKS INTO THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE BUT GOOD OLD WILLIE!...
IF YOU LIKE THE RACCOON SHOT, I'LL RETOUCH THE MAN IN THAT PANTHER COSTUME OUT OF THE PRINT--
GOOD GOSH! THAT'S JOE TINKER IN THE PICTURE! HE WAS "CAUGHT" ON HIS WAY TO THE JEWEL STORE ROBBERY WEARING HIS PANTHER GET-UP!

I'LL CHECK WITH YOU LATER! I'VE GOT TO GET READY FOR TONIGHT'S BEAUTY CONTEST AT THE GRAND PLAZA!
FARR DOESN'T REALIZE WHAT HE'S GOT IN HIS SHOT--BUT HE WILL WHEN THAT PICTURE OF THE JEWEL STORE ROBBERY APPEARS IN THE NEXT EDITION! IF HE TAKES THE NEGATIVE TO THE POLICE--THEY'LL ARREST JOE--

--AND MY COVER-UP HERE AS THE HEAD OF THE PANTHER GANG MAY BE EXPOSED! I'LL CALL THE BOYS--

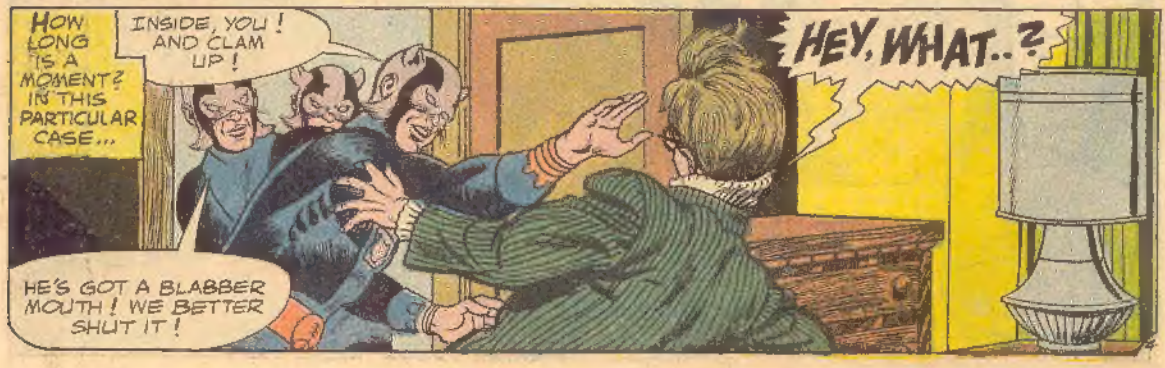
GET OVER TO FARR'S PLACE AND GRAB THAT NEGATIVE! THEN MEET ME AT TEN O'CLOCK-- YOU KNOW WHERE! BUT REMEMBER-- NO KILLING! WE DON'T WANT A MURDER RAP HANGING OVER US!

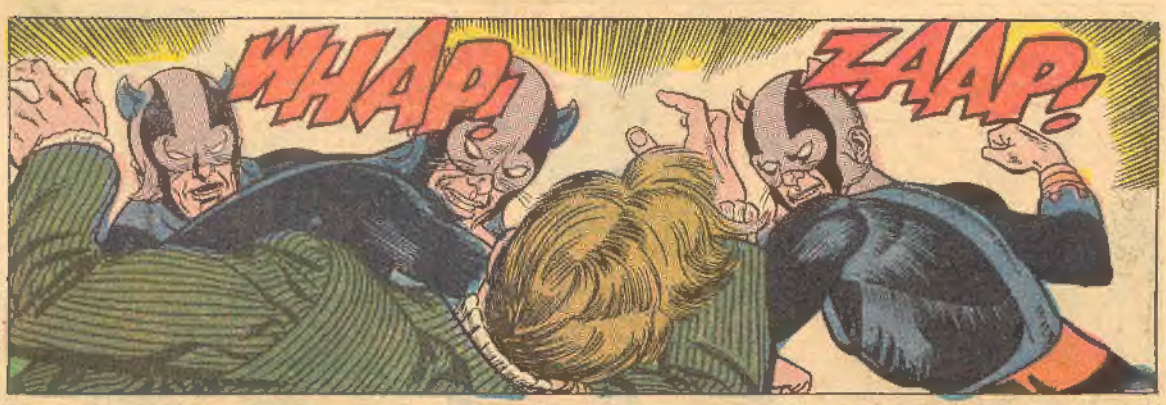

POOR, UNSUSPECTING WILLIE FARR GOES HOME-- WHERE HE FINDS HIS FRIEND RAY (ATOM) PALMER WORKING IN HIS DARK ROOM...
HELLO, RAY! WON'T HAVE MUCH TIME TO GIVE YOU A LESSON TONIGHT! DAWN HUDSON IS A FINALIST IN THE BEAUTY CONTEST--AND I WANT TO ROOT HER HOME A WINNER...
YOUR SECRET LOVE YOU TOLD ME ABOUT, eh?

THIS LESSON WILL BE A QUICKIE, RAY-- USING THIS ELECTRIC IRON...

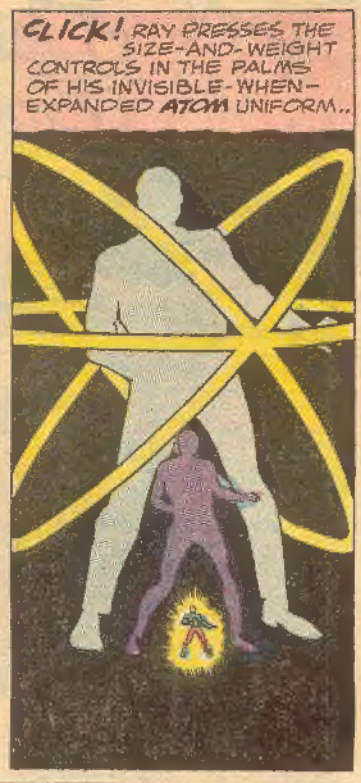
I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU HOW TO TAKE INFRA-RED PICTURES MERELY FROM THE HEAT GIVEN OFF BY AN ORDINARY ELECTRIC IRON!
STUDYING PHOTO-GRAPHY WITH YOU HAS HELPED ME WITH MY SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WORK. YOU SURE KNOW YOUR STUFF...
BRING!

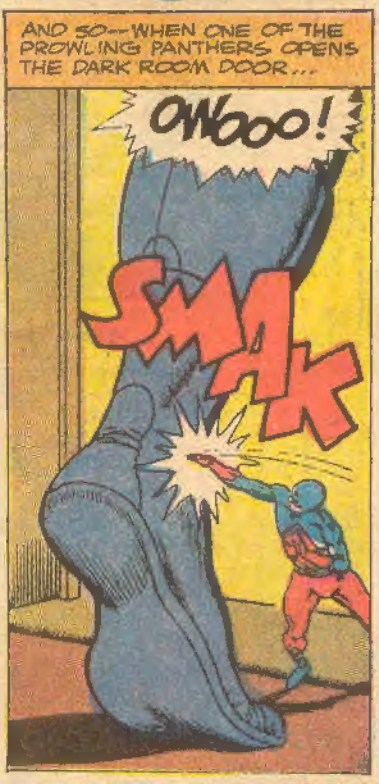
THERE'S THE DOORBELL! I'LL ANSWER IT-- BE BACK IN A MOMENT...
OKAY! I'LL KEEP BUSY.
BRRING!

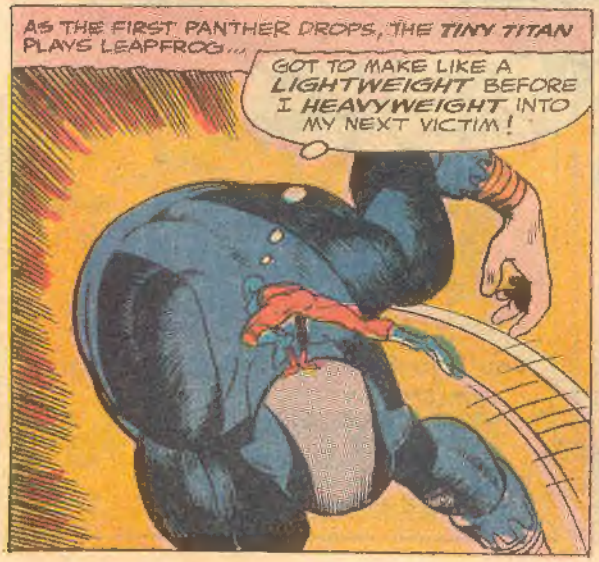

HOW LONG IS A MOMENT? IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE...
INSIDE, YOU! AND CLAM UP!
HEY, WHAT..?
HE'S GOT A BLABBER MOUTH! WE BETTER SHUT IT!


WHAP!
ZAAP!

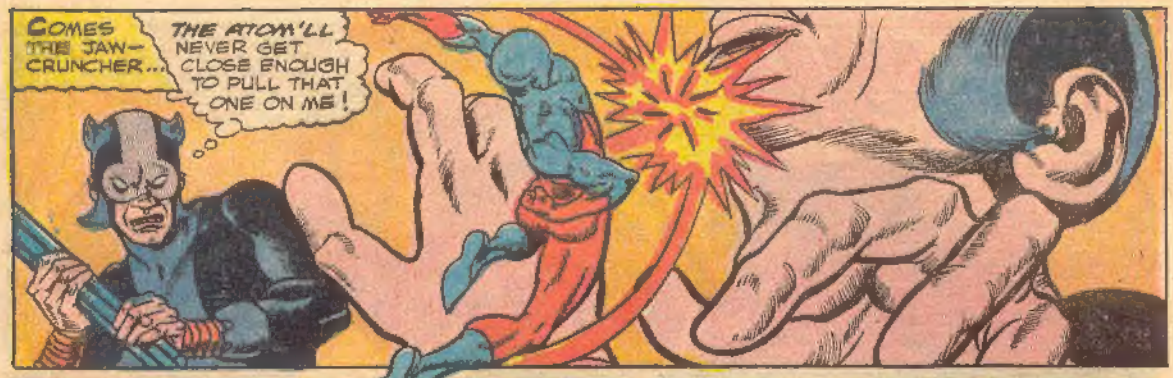
THAT'S NOT THE "SOUND OF MUSIC" RAY'S HEARING IN THE DARK ROOM...
THAT GROAN--SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM WILLIE!
OHHHH
THE NEGATIVE'S SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE! SEARCH THE PLACE!

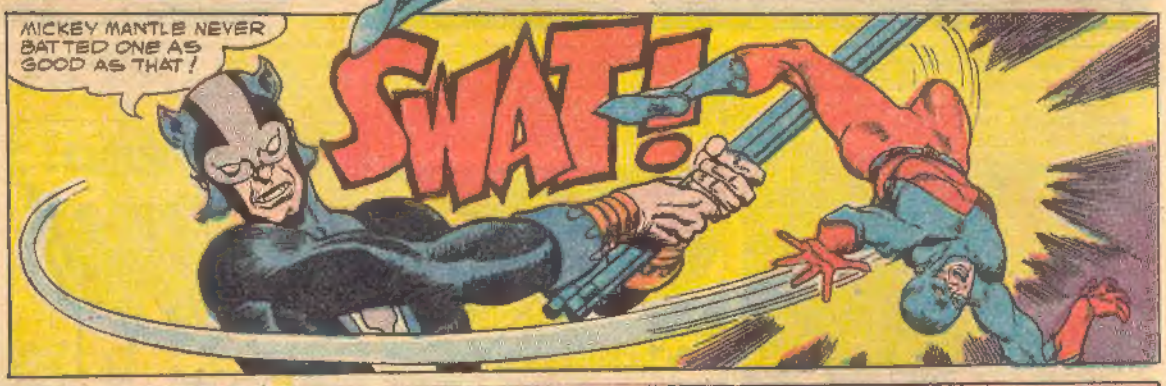

CLICK! RAY PRESSES THE SIZE-AND-WEIGHT CONTROLS IN THE PALMS OF HIS INVISIBLE-WHEN-EXPANDED ATOM UNIFORM..


AND SO--WHEN ONE OF THE PROWLING PANTHERS OPENS THE DARK ROOM DOOR...
OWOOO!
SMAK

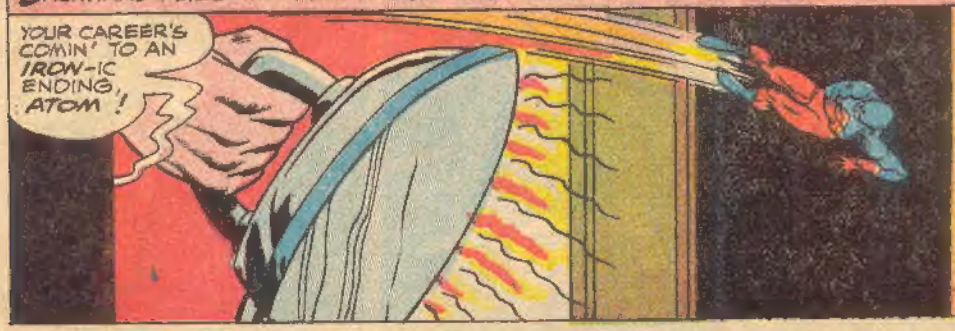

AS THE FIRST PANTHER DROPS, THE TINY TITAN PLAYS LEAPFROG...
GOT TO MAKE LIKE A LIGHTWEIGHT BEFORE I HEAVYWEIGHT INTO MY NEXT VICTIM!

OH, HAVE I GOT A GOODIE FOR YOUR SWEET-TOOTH!





BACKWARD FLIES THE *TINY TITAN*--INTO THE DARK ROOM--AS A HAND GRABS THE RED-HOT IRON...



DON'T JUST SIT THERE BITING YOUR NAILS IN WORRY OVER THE WORLD'S SMALLEST SUPER-HERO!

TURN TO THE 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING--FOR THE FOLLOW-UP ACTION!

NOW--in your DAILY NEWSPAPER!

VILLAINS BEWARE! They're Here! BAM! ZAP! POW!! POW!!

BATMAN and ROBIN

IN THE COMIC PAGES OF MORE THAN 200 NEWSPAPERS FROM COAST TO COAST!

DISTRIBUTED BY THE LEDGER SYNDICATE

SUPERMAN DC NATIONAL COMICS

NOW--in COLOR and CINEMASCOPE!

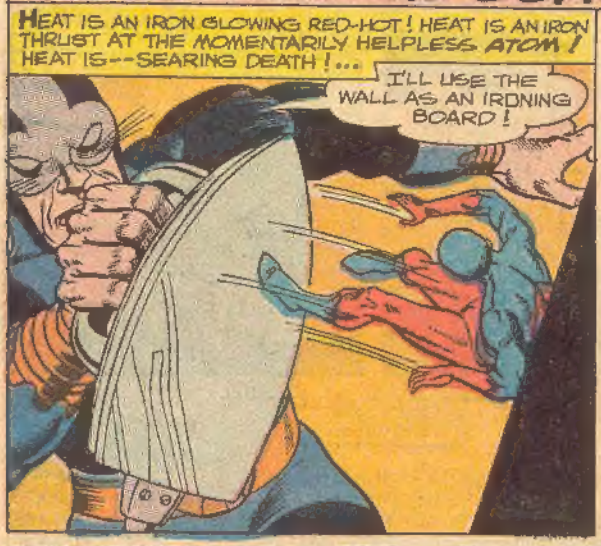
ZAP! ZUNK!! WHAM! POW! GLOMP!

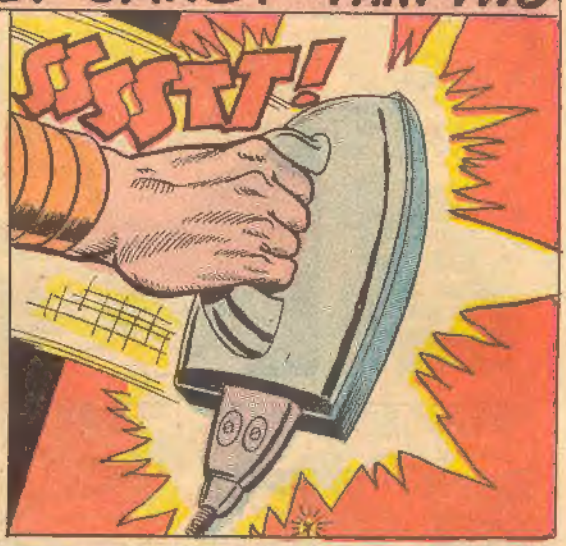
You'll just hate yourself if you miss 20th CENTURY-FOX'S PRODUCTION of

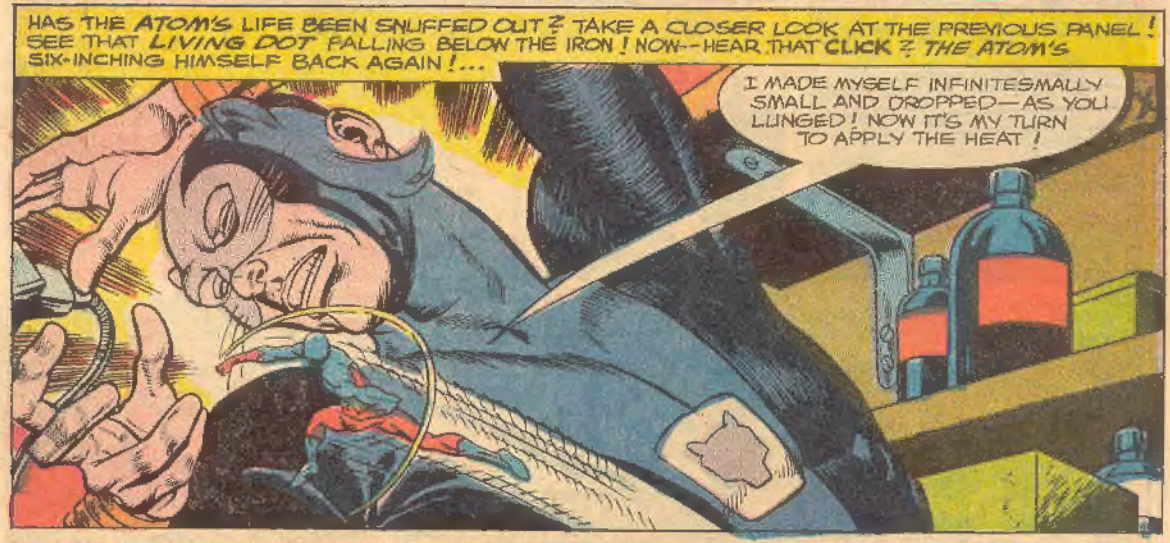
BATMAN

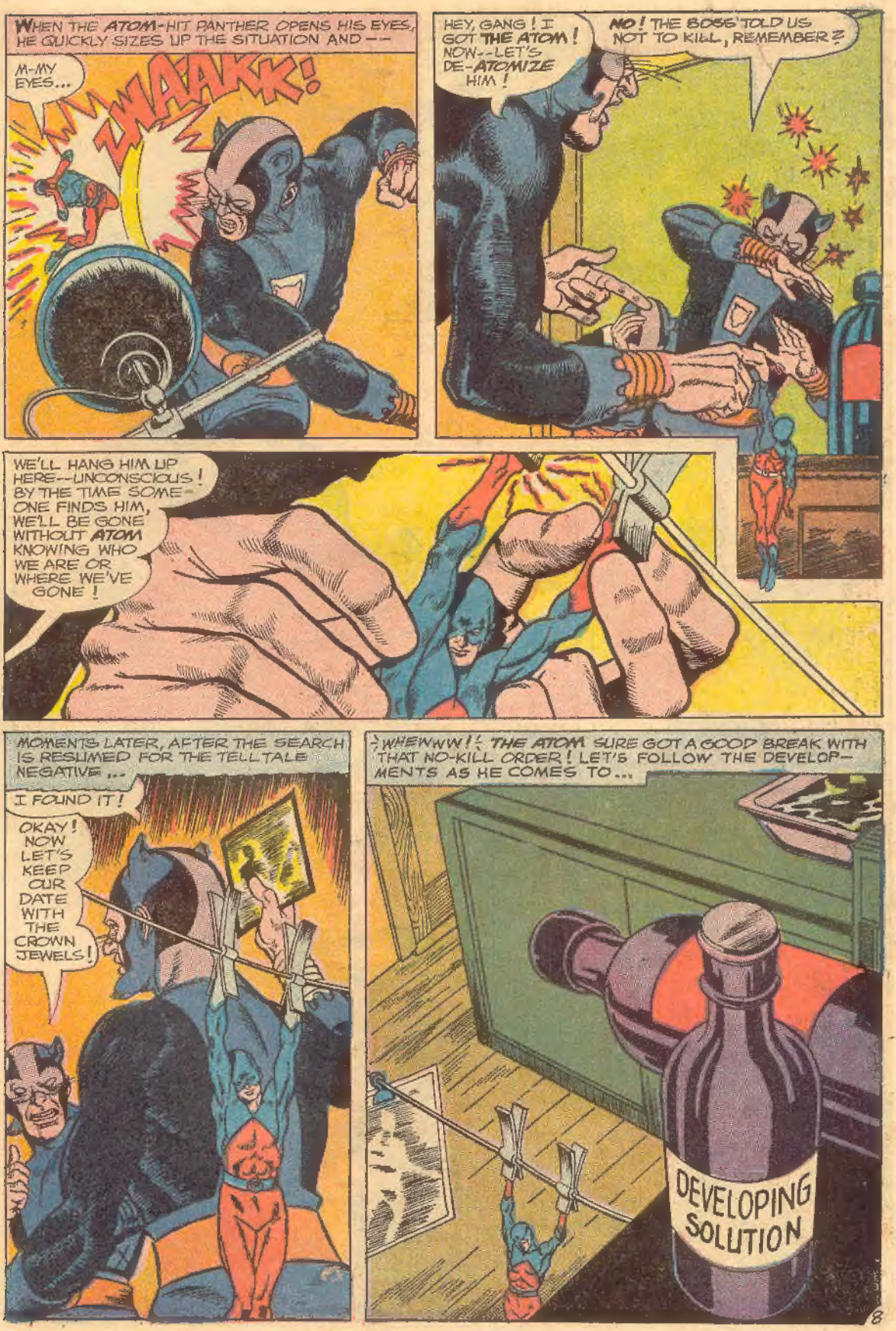
CO-STARRING The PENGUIN, CATWOMAN and The JOKER!

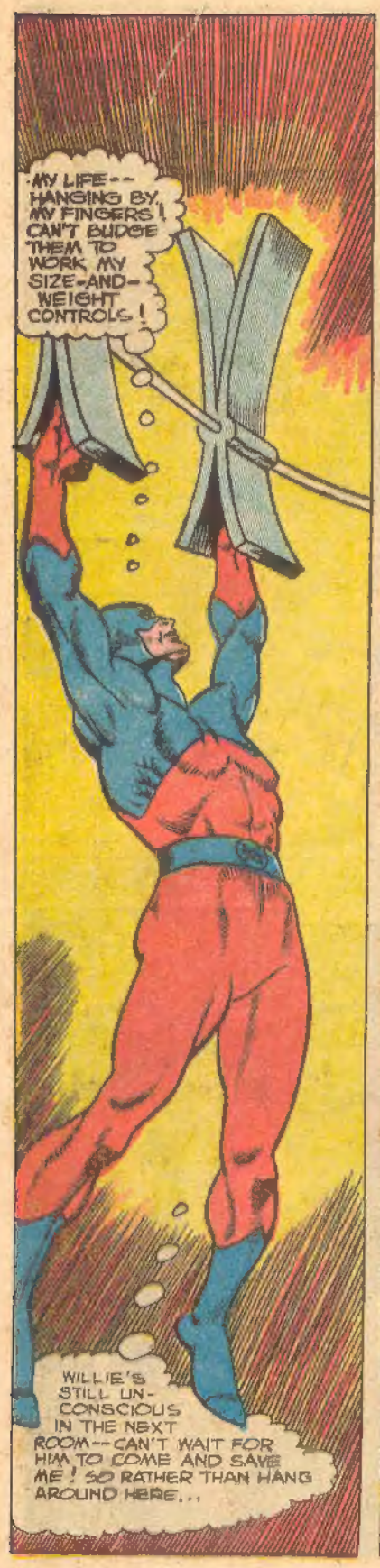
BEAUTY and THE BEAST-GANG!--PART TWO

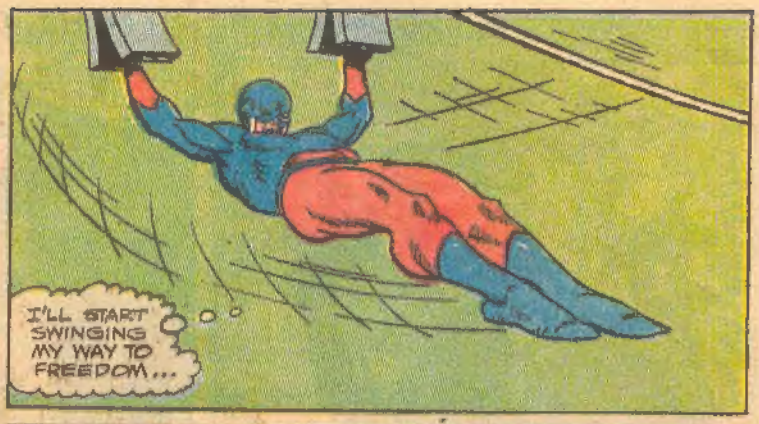


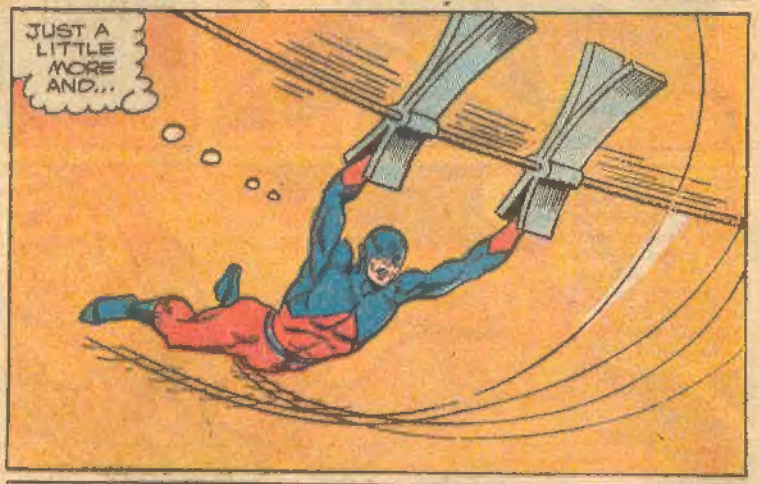


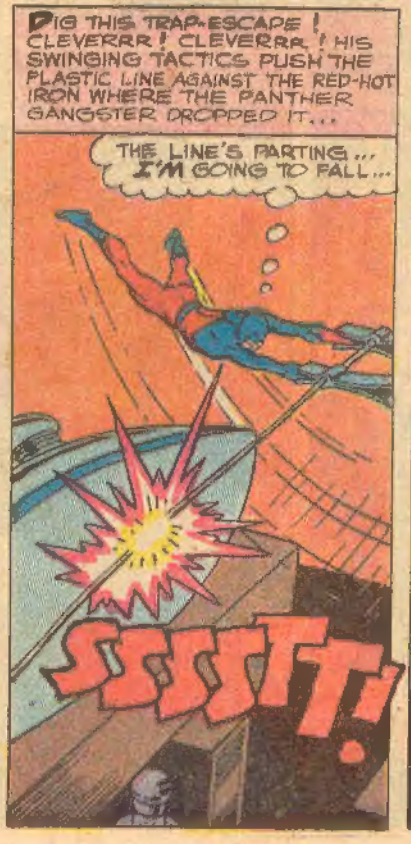


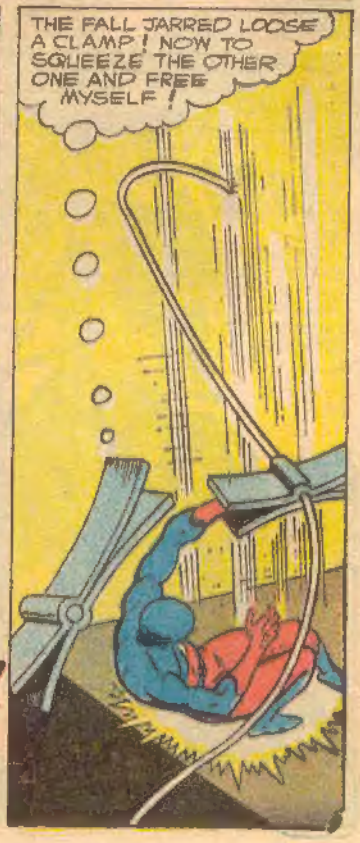

WHEN THE ATOM-HIT PANTHER OPENS HIS EYES, HE QUICKLY SIZES UP THE SITUATION AND --
M-MY EYES...
ZWAAKK!
HEY, GANG! I GOT THE ATOM! NOW--LET'S DE-ATOMIZE HIM!
NO! THE BOSS TOLD US NOT TO KILL, REMEMBER?
WE'LL HANG HIM UP HERE--UNCONSCIOUS! BY THE TIME SOMEONE FINDS HIM, WE'LL BE GONE WITHOUT ATOM KNOWING WHO WE ARE OR WHERE WE'VE GONE!
MOMENTS LATER, AFTER THE SEARCH IS RESUMED FOR THE TELLTALE NEGATIVE...
I FOUND IT!
OKAY! NOW LET'S KEEP OUR DATE WITH THE CROWN JEWELS!
WHEWWW! THE ATOM SURE GOT A GOOD BREAK WITH THAT NO-KILL ORDER! LET'S FOLLOW THE DEVELOPMENTS AS HE COMES TO...
DEVELOPING SOLUTION


MY LIFE -- HANGING BY MY FINGERS! CAN'T BUDGE THEM TO WORK MY SIZE-AND-WEIGHT CONTROLS!
WILLIE'S STILL UN-CONSCIOUS IN THE NEXT ROOM -- CAN'T WAIT FOR HIM TO COME AND SAVE ME! SO RATHER THAN HANG AROUND HERE...

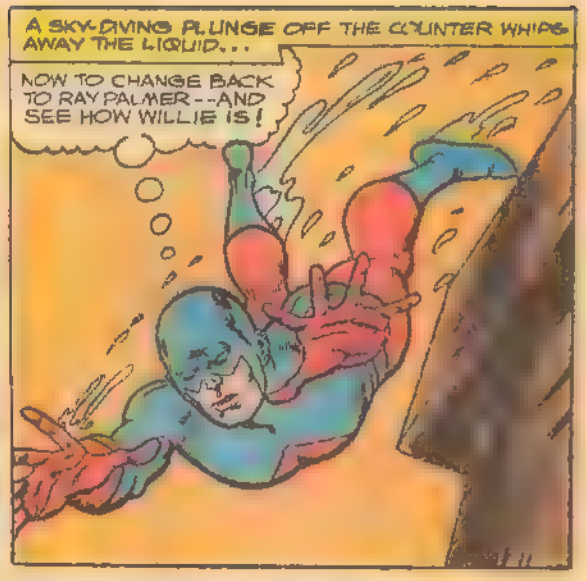

I'LL START SWINGING MY WAY TO FREEDOM...

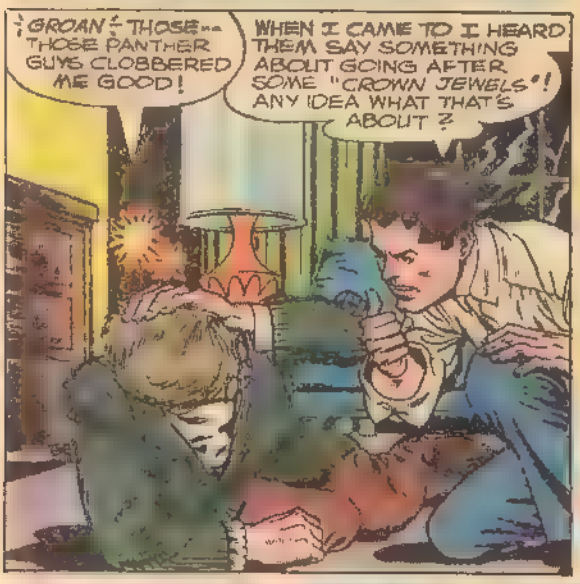

JUST A LITTLE MORE AND...

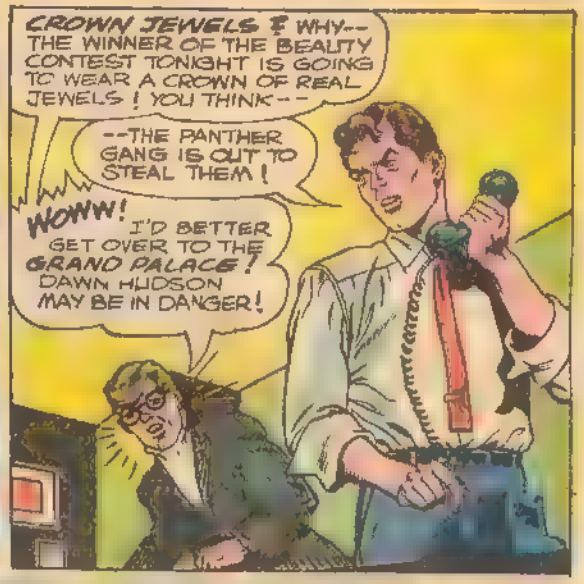

DIG THIS TRAP-ESCAPE! CLEVERRR! CLEVERRR! HIS SWINGING TACTICS PUSH THE PLASTIC LINE AGAINST THE RED-HOT IRON WHERE THE PANTHER GANGSTER DROPPED IT...
THE LINE'S PARTING... I'M GOING TO FALL...
SSSSTT!

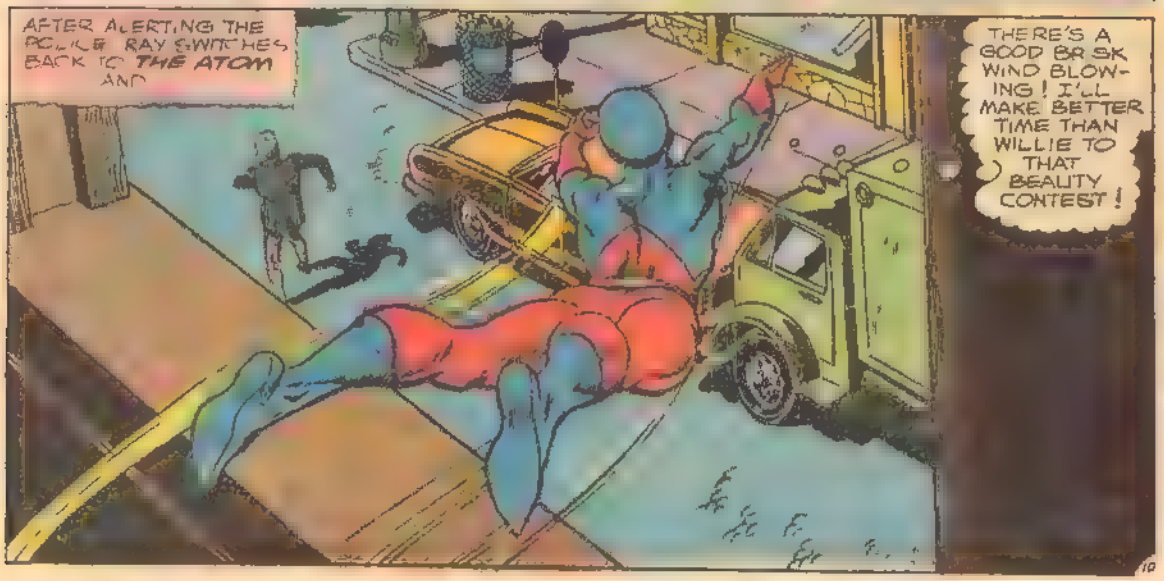

THE FALL JARRED LOOSE A CLAMP! NOW TO SQUEEZE THE OTHER ONE AND FREE MYSELF!

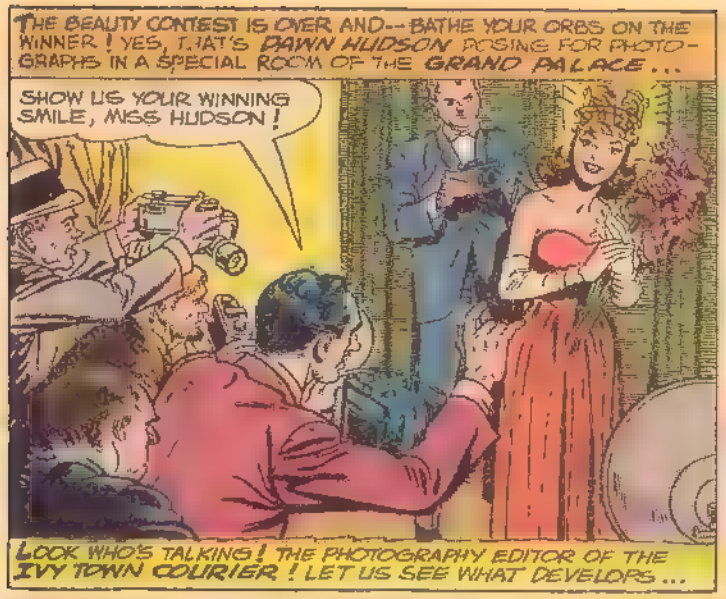
NEXT MOVE--A DIVE INTO A NEUTRALIZER TRAY TO COOL OFF THE PERSPIRING ATOM...


A SKY-DIVING PLUNGE OFF THE COUNTER WHIPS AWAY THE LIQUID...
NOW TO CHANGE BACK TO RAY PALMER--AND SEE HOW WILLIE IS!

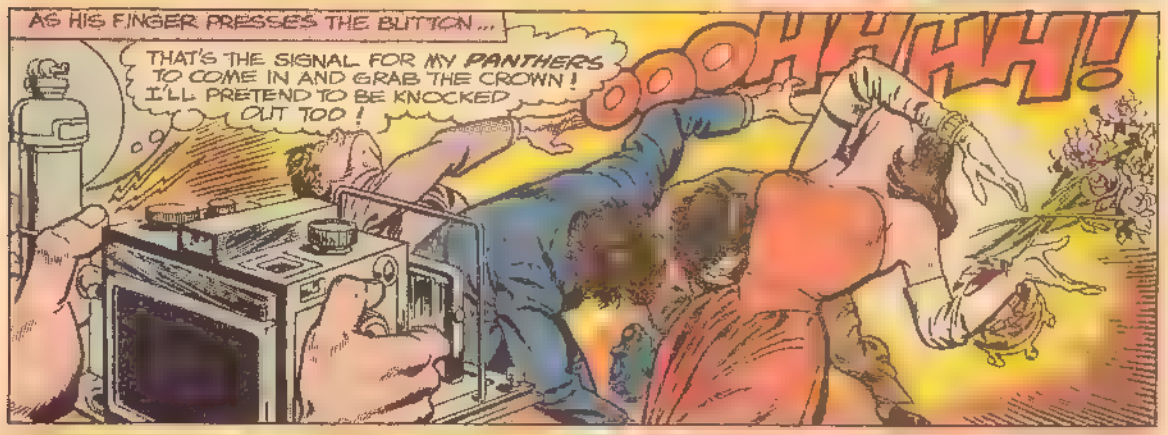

GROAN! THOSE-- THOSE PANTHER GUYS CLOBBERED ME GOOD!
WHEN I CAME TO I HEARD THEM SAY SOMETHING ABOUT GOING AFTER SOME "CROWN JEWELS"! ANY IDEA WHAT THAT'S ABOUT?

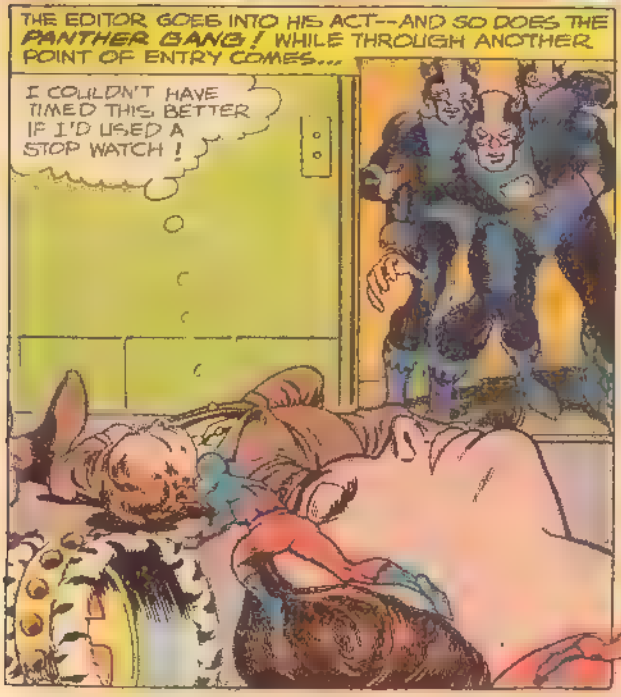

CROWN JEWELS? WHY-- THE WINNER OF THE BEAUTY CONTEST TONIGHT IS GOING TO WEAR A CROWN OF REAL JEWELS! YOU THINK--
--THE PANTHER GANG IS OUT TO STEAL THEM!
WOWW! I'D BETTER GET OVER TO THE GRAND PALACE! DAWN HUDSON MAY BE IN DANGER!

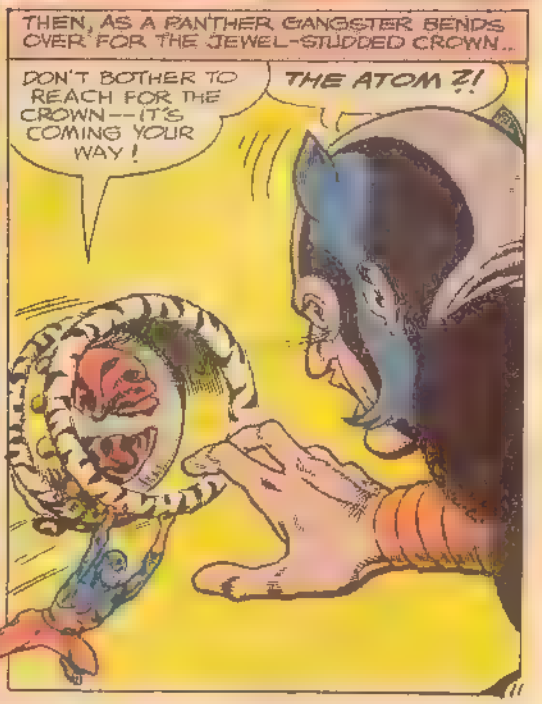

AFTER ALERTING THE POLICE RAY SWITCHES BACK TO THE ATOM AND
THERE'S A GOOD BRISK WIND BLOWING! I'LL MAKE BETTER TIME THAN WILLIE TO THAT BEAUTY CONTEST!

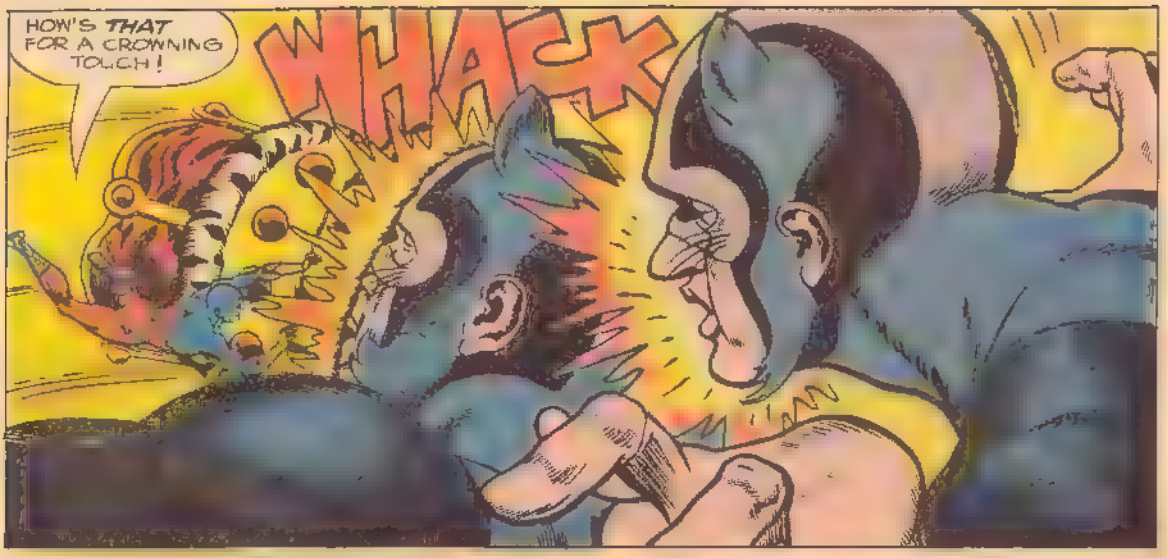

THE BEAUTY CONTEST IS OVER AND--BATHE YOUR ORBS ON THE WINNER! YES, THAT'S DAWN HUDSON POSING FOR PHOTOGRAPHS IN A SPECIAL ROOM OF THE GRAND PALACE...
SHOW US YOUR WINNING SMILE, MISS HUDSON!
LOOK WHO'S TALKING! THE PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR OF THE IVY TOWN COURIER! LET US SEE WHAT DEVELOPS...

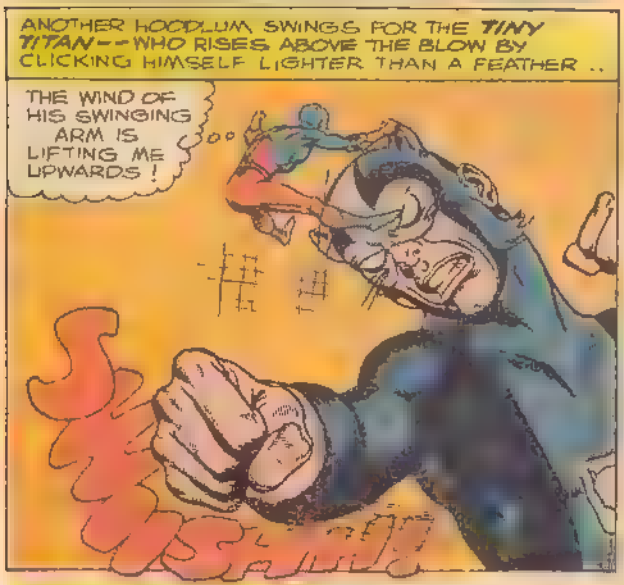
MY SPECIAL LIGHT BULB WILL RELEASE AN ELECTRONIC IMPULSE SO HIGH-PITCHED IT WILL KNOCK OUT EVERYBODY IN HERE--WHILE SPECIAL EARPLUGS PROTECT ME!


AS HIS FINGER PRESSES THE BUTTON...
THAT'S THE SIGNAL FOR MY PANTHERS TO COME IN AND GRAB THE CROWN! I'LL PRETEND TO BE KNOCKED OUT TOO!
OOOHHHHH!

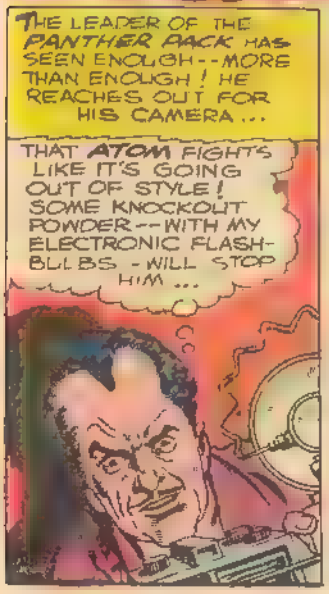

THE EDITOR GOES INTO HIS ACT--AND SO DOES THE PANTHER GANG! WHILE THROUGH ANOTHER POINT OF ENTRY COMES...
I COULDN'T HAVE TIMED THIS BETTER IF I'D USED A STOP WATCH!


THEN, AS A PANTHER GANGSTER BENDS OVER FOR THE JEWEL-STUDDED CROWN...
DON'T BOTHER TO REACH FOR THE CROWN--IT'S COMING YOUR WAY!
THE ATOM ?!


HOW'S THAT FOR A CROWNING TOUCH!
WHACK

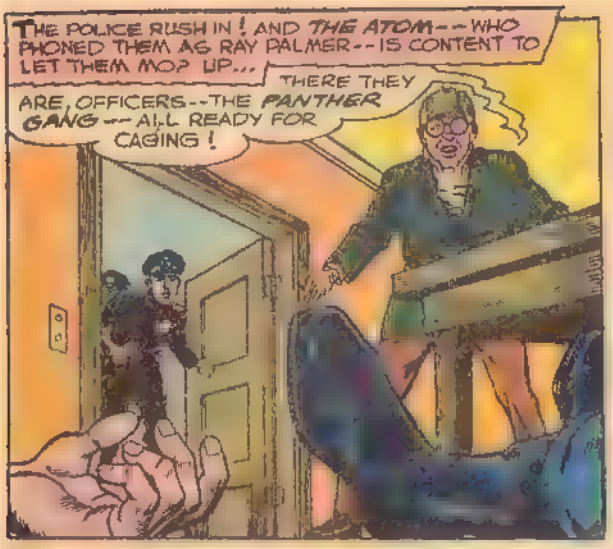

ANOTHER HOODLUM SWINGS FOR THE TINY TITAN--WHO RISES ABOVE THE BLOW BY CLICKING HIMSELF LIGHTER THAN A FEATHER ..
THE WIND OF HIS SWINGING ARM IS LIFTING ME UPWARDS!

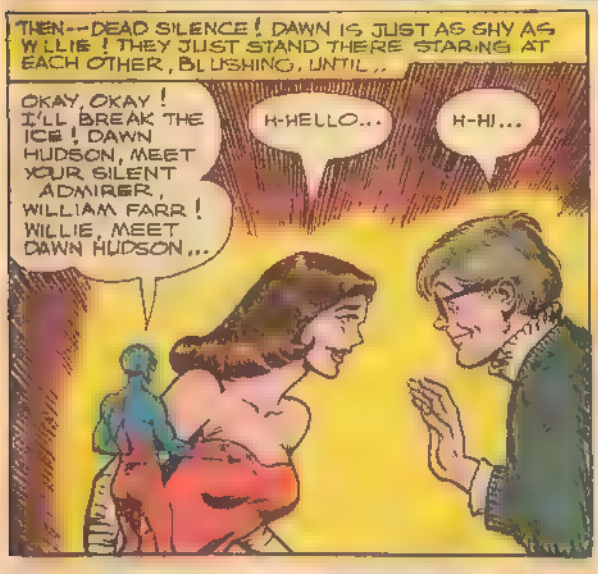
180 POUNDS OF WEIGHT ON THIS GUY'S SKULL WILL KEEP HIM ON THE SIDELINES!
THUNK!

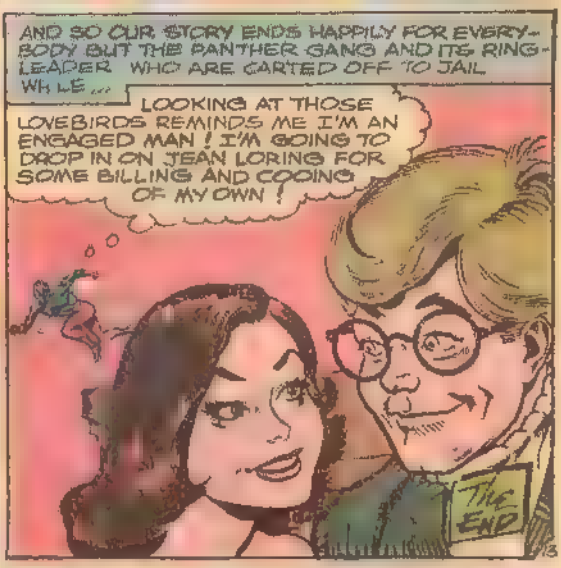

THE LEADER OF THE PANTHER PACK HAS SEEN ENOUGH--MORE THAN ENOUGH! HE REACHES OUT FOR HIS CAMERA...
THAT ATOM FIGHTS LIKE IT'S GOING OUT OF STYLE! SOME KNOCKOUT POWDER--WITH MY ELECTRONIC FLASH-BULBS--WILL STOP HIM...

HOLD IT, CHUM!
HUH? NILLIE FARR!

WHEN I TAUGHT YOU HOW TO USE THAT SPECIAL LIGHT-BULB I INVENTED--I NEVER MEANT IT TO BE USED LIKE THIS!
SOK







To Gain the GREATEST POWER on EARTH... HE HAD TO DARE THE WORLD'S WORTHIEST SACRIFICE! HIS CHOSEN VICTIM HAWKMAN!

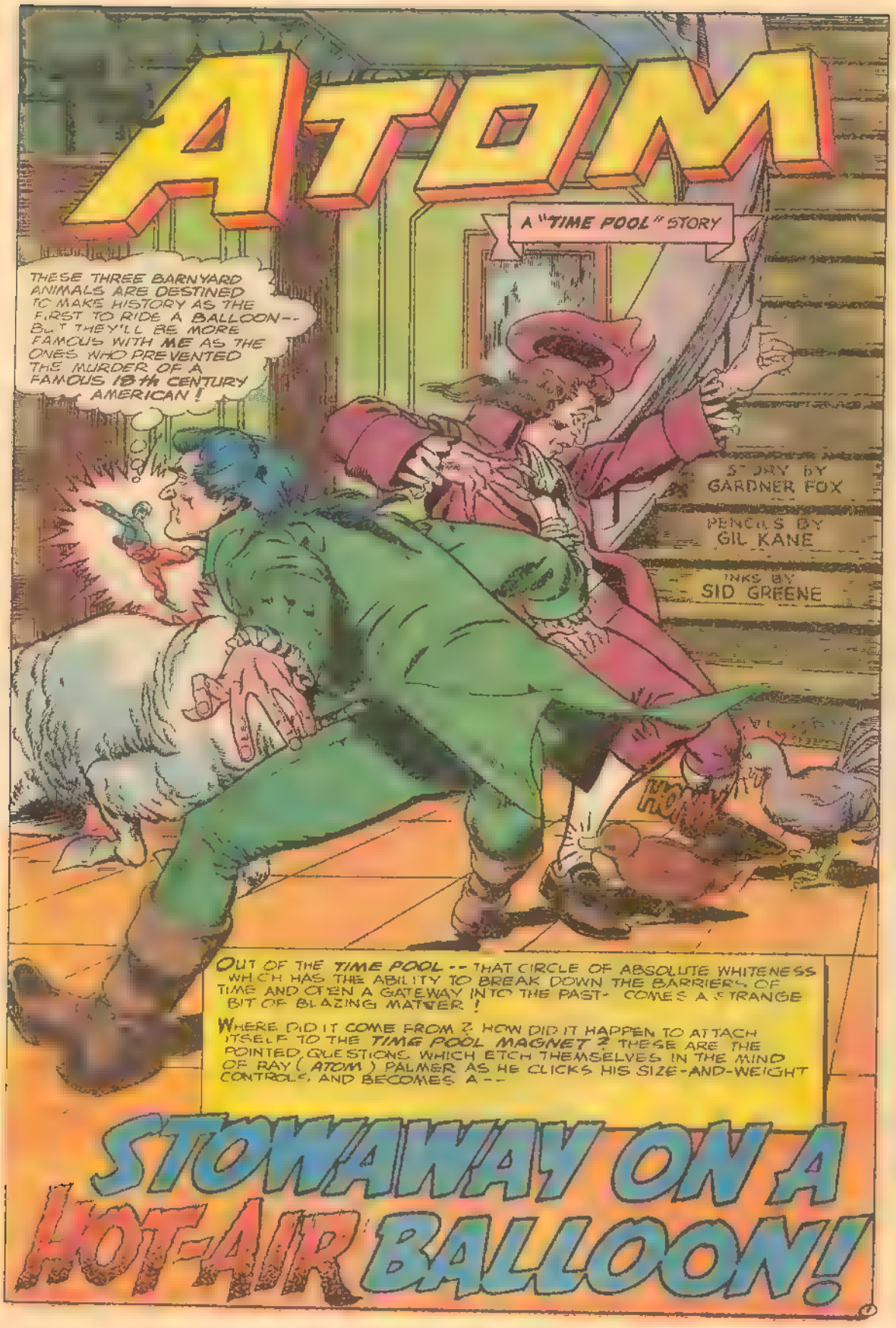
THE RESULT--THE MOST AMAZING AIR-BATTLE EVER FOUGHT!

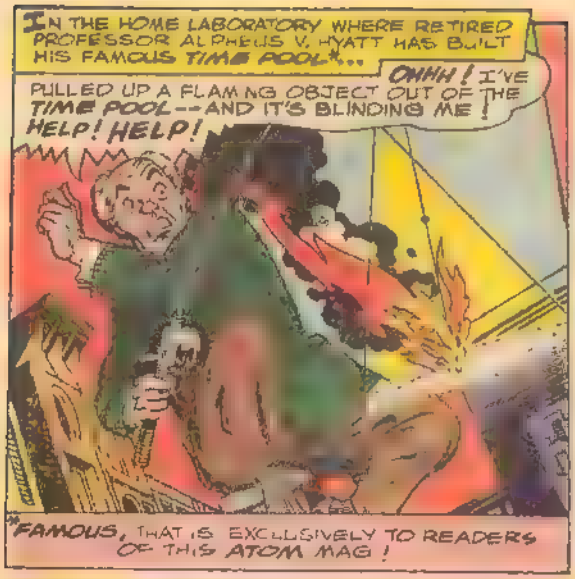
ON SALE AUG. 11th

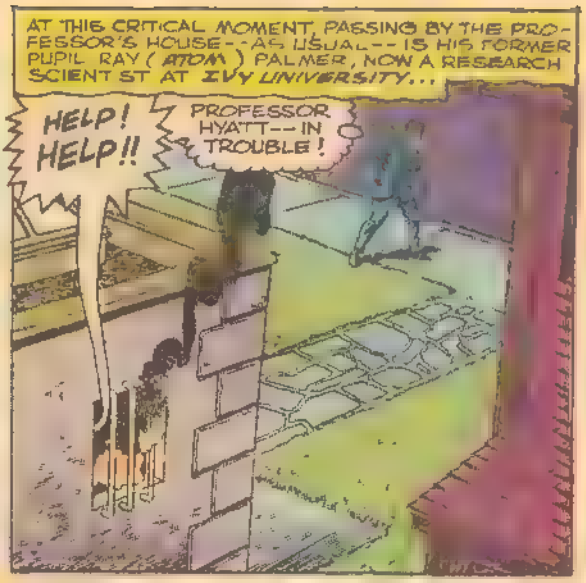
SUPERMAN DC NATIONAL COMICS

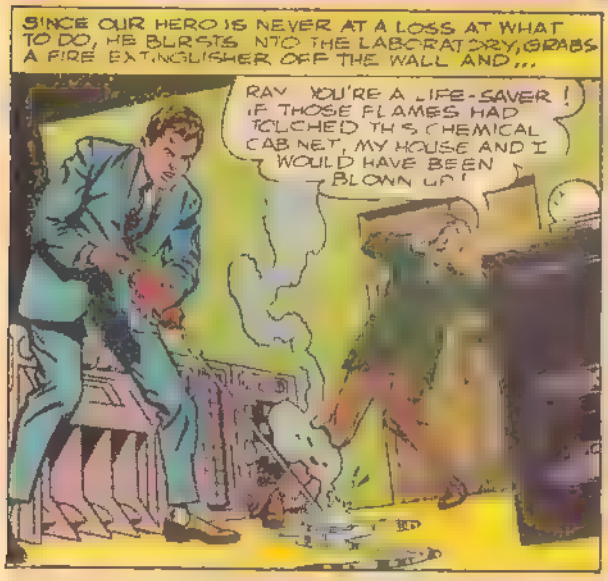
LORD of the FLYING GORILLAS! HAWKMAN

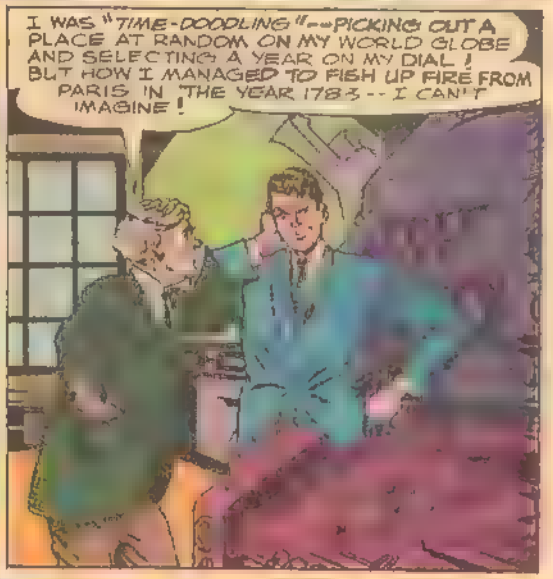
A GO GO GORILLA WITH A BIG BEAT TAKES ON HAWKMAN AND HIS SWINGING MATE!

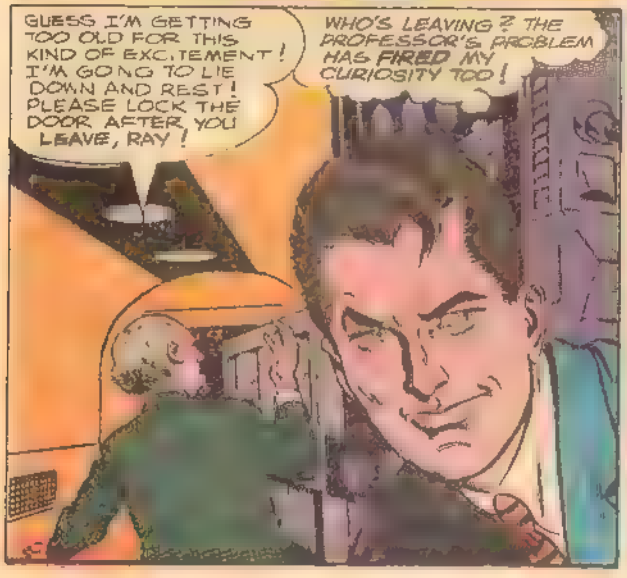

ATOM
A "TIME POOL" STORY
THESE THREE BARNYARD ANIMALS ARE DESTINED TO MAKE HISTORY AS THE FIRST TO RIDE A BALLOON-- BUT THEY'LL BE MORE FAMOUS WITH ME AS THE ONES WHO PREVENTED THE MURDER OF A FAMOUS 18th CENTURY AMERICAN!
STORY BY GARDNER FOX
PENCILS BY GIL KANE
INKS BY SID GREENE
OUT OF THE TIME POOL -- THAT CIRCLE OF ABSOLUTE WHITENESS WHICH HAS THE ABILITY TO BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS OF TIME AND OPEN A GATEWAY INTO THE PAST- COMES A STRANGE BIT OF BLAZING MATTER!
WHERE DID IT COME FROM? HOW DID IT HAPPEN TO ATTACH ITSELF TO THE TIME POOL MAGNET? THESE ARE THE POINTED QUESTIONS WHICH ETCH THEMSELVES IN THE MIND OF RAY (ATOM) PALMER AS HE CLICKS HIS SIZE-AND-WEIGHT CONTROLS, AND BECOMES A--
STOWAWAY ON A HOT-AIR BALLOON!

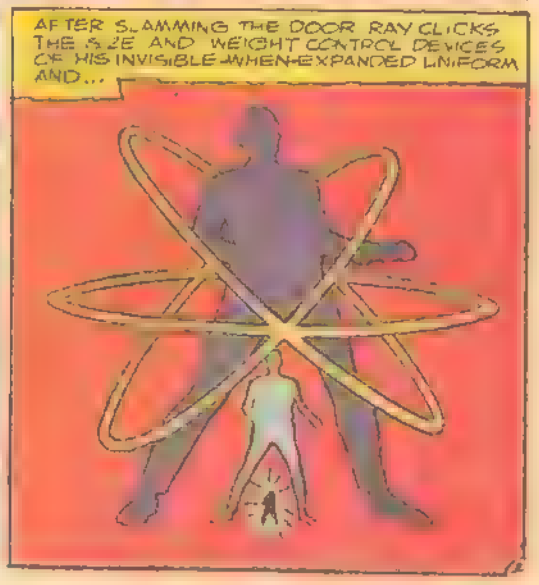

IN THE HOME LABORATORY WHERE RETIRED PROFESSOR ALPHEUS V. HYATT HAS BUILT HIS FAMOUS TIME POOL*...
OMHH! I'VE PULLED UP A FLAMING OBJECT OUT OF THE TIME POOL--AND IT'S BLINDING ME! HELP! HELP!
*FAMOUS, THAT IS EXCLUSIVELY TO READERS OF THIS ATOM MAG!

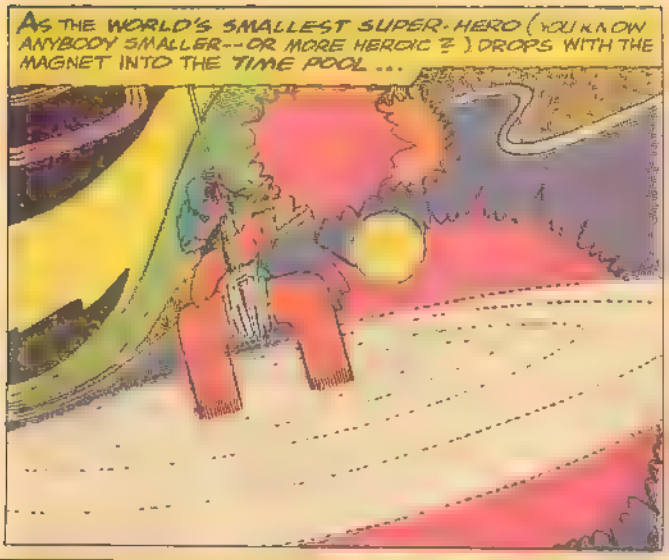

AT THIS CRITICAL MOMENT, PASSING BY THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE--AS USUAL--IS HIS FORMER PUPIL RAY (ATOM) PALMER, NOW A RESEARCH SCIENTIST AT IVY UNIVERSITY...
HELP! HELP!!
PROFESSOR HYATT--IN TROUBLE!

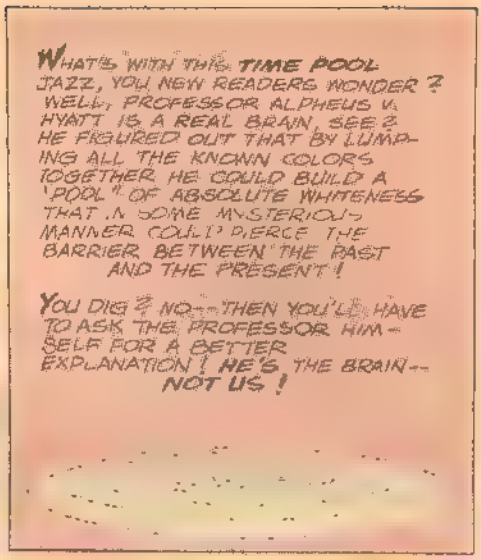

SINCE OUR HERO IS NEVER AT A LOSS AT WHAT TO DO, HE BURSTS INTO THE LABORATORY, GRABS A FIRE EXTINGUISHER OFF THE WALL AND...
RAY YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER! IF THOSE FLAMES HAD TOUCHED THIS CHEMICAL CABINET, MY HOUSE AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN BLOWN UP!

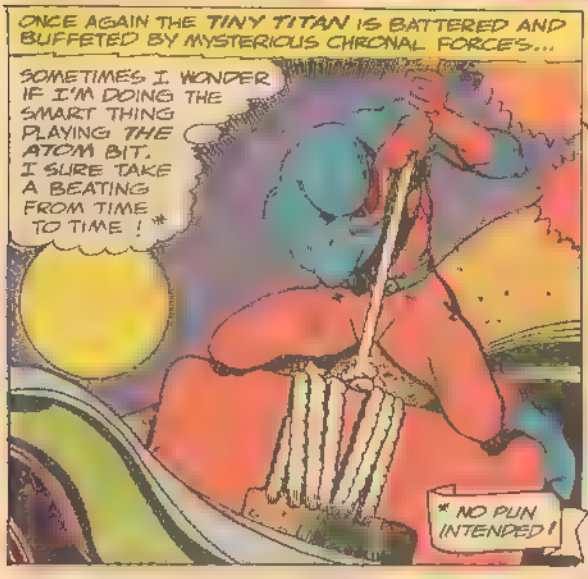

I WAS "TIME-DOODLING"--PICKING OUT A PLACE AT RANDOM ON MY WORLD GLOBE AND SELECTING A YEAR ON MY DIAL! BUT HOW I MANAGED TO FISH UP FIRE FROM PARIS IN THE YEAR 1783--I CAN'T IMAGINE!

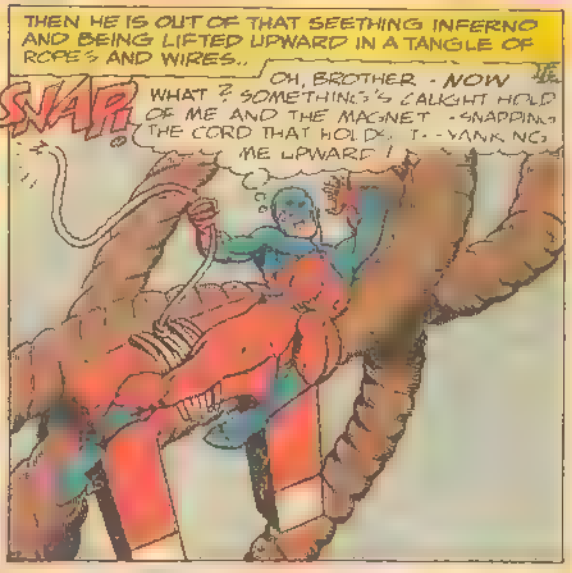

GUESS I'M GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS KIND OF EXCITEMENT! I'M GOING TO LIE DOWN AND REST! PLEASE LOCK THE DOOR AFTER YOU LEAVE, RAY!
WHO'S LEAVING? THE PROFESSOR'S PROBLEM HAS FIRED MY CURIOSITY TOO!


AFTER SLAMMING THE DOOR RAY CLICKS THE SIZE AND WEIGHT CONTROL DEVICES OF HIS INVISIBLE-WHEN-EXPANDED UNIFORM AND...

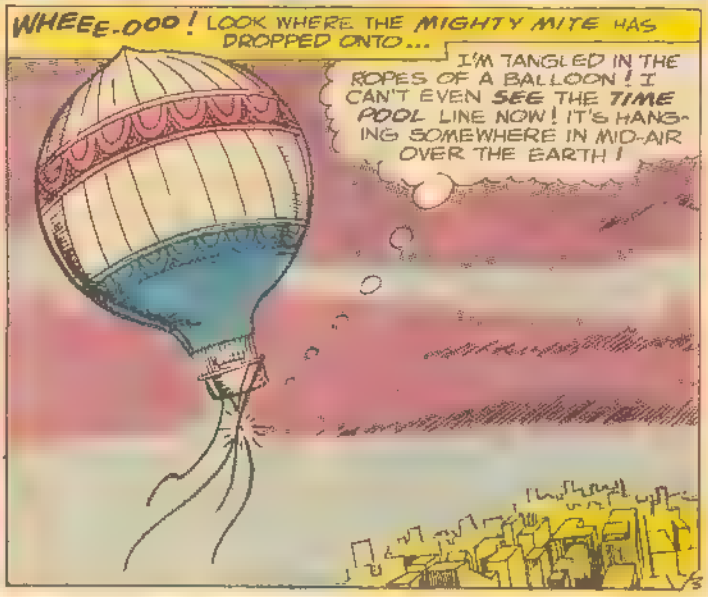

AS THE WORLD'S SMALLEST SUPER-HERO (YOU KNOW ANYBODY SMALLER--OR MORE HEROIC ?) DROPS WITH THE MAGNET INTO THE TIME POOL ...

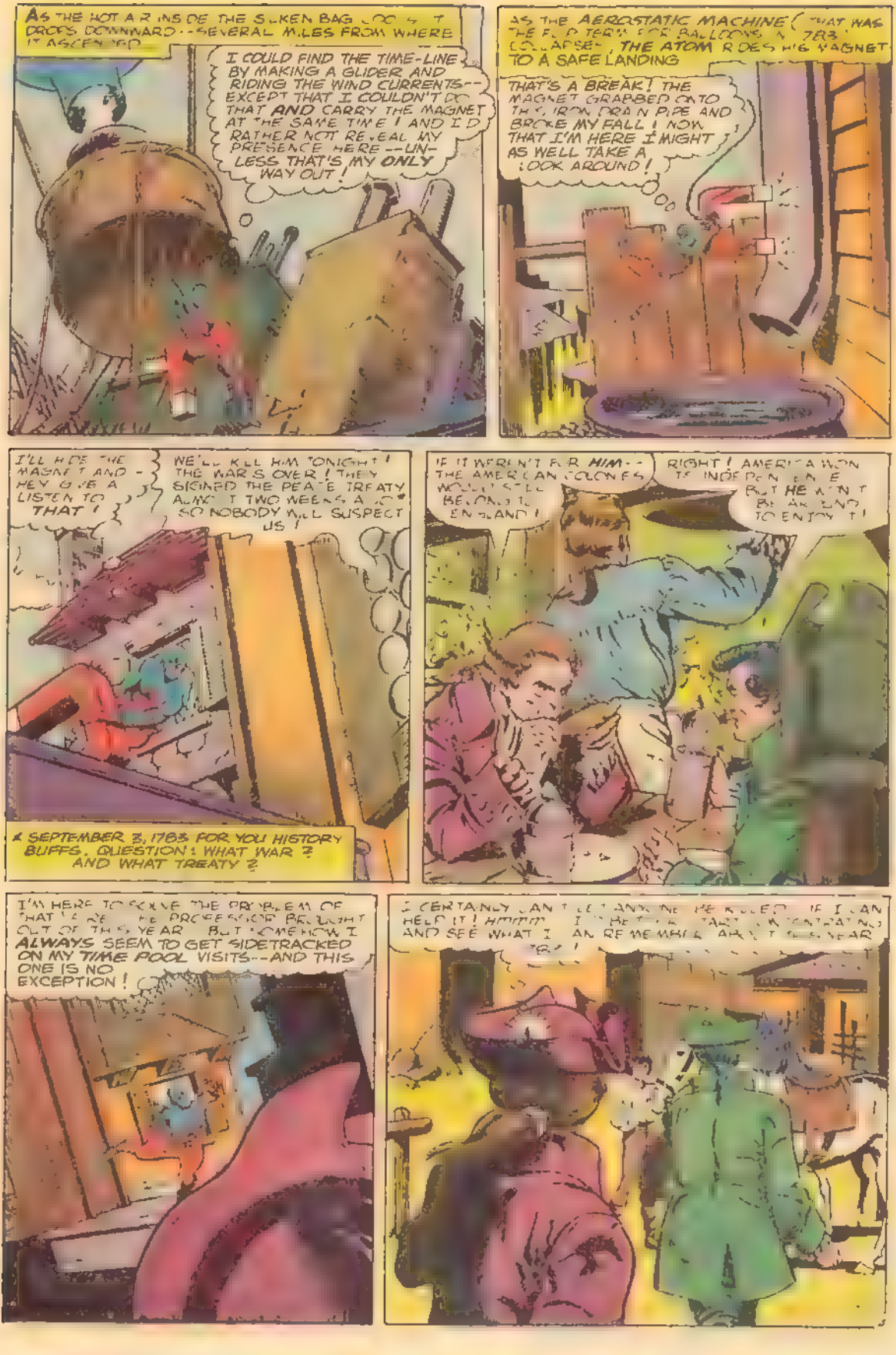

WHAT'S WITH THIS TIME POOL JAZZ, YOU NEW READERS WONDER ? WELL, PROFESSOR ALPHEUS V. HYATT IS A REAL BRAIN, SEE ? HE FIGURED OUT THAT BY LUMPING ALL THE KNOWN COLORS TOGETHER HE COULD BUILD A "POOL" OF ABSOLUTE WHITENESS THAT IN SOME MYSTERIOUS MANNER COULD PIERCE THE BARRIER BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT !
YOU DIG ? NO--THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THE PROFESSOR HIMSELF FOR A BETTER EXPLANATION ! HE'S THE BRAIN--NOT US !

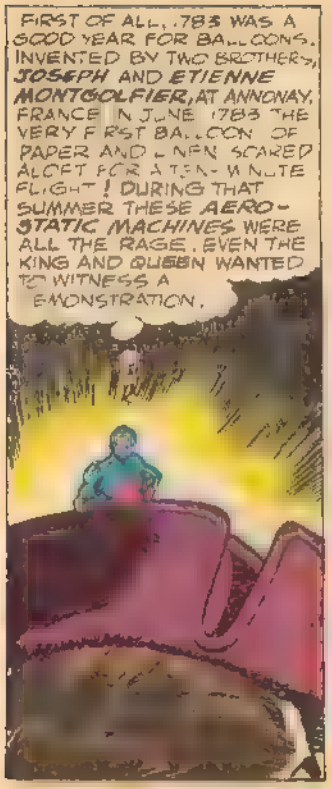

ONCE AGAIN THE TINY TITAN IS BATTERED AND BUFFETED BY MYSTERIOUS CHRONAL FORCES...
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF I'M DOING THE SMART THING PLAYING THE ATOM BIT. I SURE TAKE A BEATING FROM TIME TO TIME ! *
* NO PUN INTENDED !


THEN HE IS OUT OF THAT SEETHING INFERNO AND BEING LIFTED UPWARD IN A TANGLE OF ROPES AND WIRES..
SNAP
OH, BROTHER - NOW WHAT ? SOMETHING'S CAUGHT HOLD OF ME AND THE MAGNET - SNAPPING THE CORD THAT HOLDS IT - YANKING ME UPWARD !

I'M CUT OFF FROM MY OWN TIME ERA--UNLESS I CAN FIND A WAY TO TIE THE MAGNET BACK ONTO THE TIME POOL FISHING LINE !

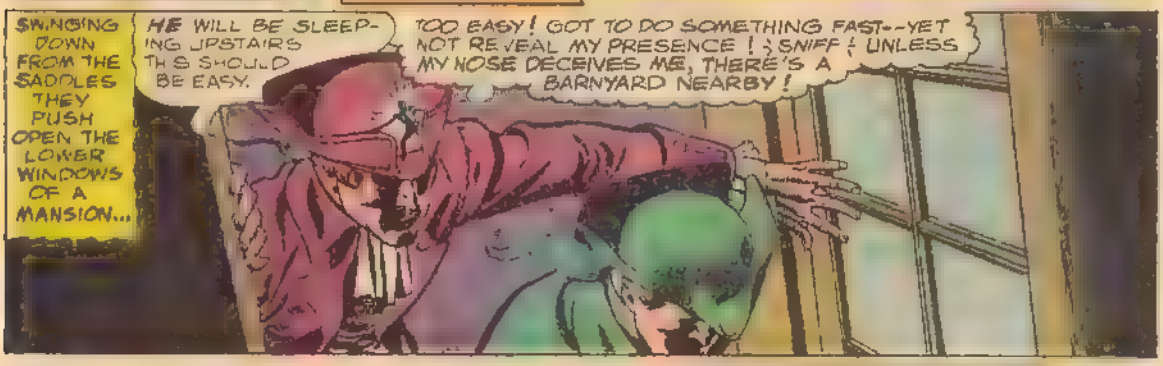

WHEEE-OOO ! LOOK WHERE THE MIGHTY MITE HAS DROPPED ONTO...
I'M TANGLED IN THE ROPES OF A BALLOON ! I CAN'T EVEN SEE THE TIME POOL LINE NOW ! IT'S HANGING SOMEWHERE IN MID-AIR OVER THE EARTH !

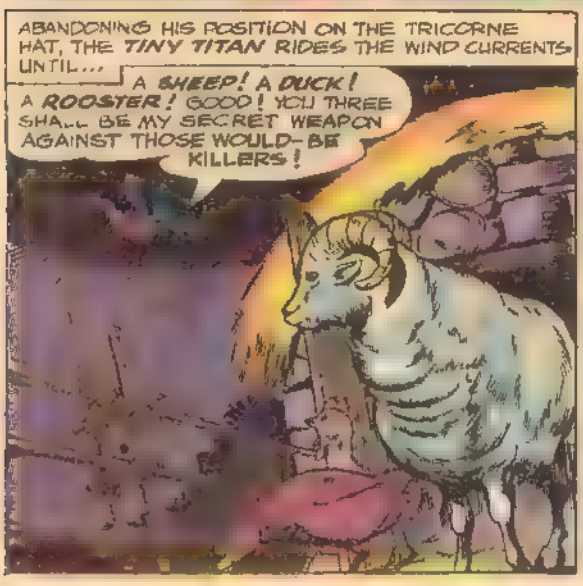

AS THE HOT AIR INSIDE THE SILKEN BAG COOLS IT DROPS DOWNWARD--SEVERAL MILES FROM WHERE IT ASCENDED
I COULD FIND THE TIME-LINE BY MAKING A GLIDER AND RIDING THE WIND CURRENTS--EXCEPT THAT I COULDN'T DO THAT AND CARRY THE MAGNET AT THE SAME TIME! AND I'D RATHER NOT REVEAL MY PRESENCE HERE--UNLESS THAT'S MY ONLY WAY OUT!
AS THE AEROSTATIC MACHINE (THAT WAS THE EARLIEST FORM OF BALLOON IN 1783) COLLAPSES, THE ATOM RIDES HIS MAGNET TO A SAFE LANDING
THAT'S A BREAK! THE MAGNET GRABBED ONTO THIS IRON DRAIN PIPE AND BROKE MY FALL! NOW THAT I'M HERE I MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A LOOK AROUND!
I'LL HIDE THE MAGNET AND--HEY, GIVE A LISTEN TO THAT!
WE'LL KILL HIM TONIGHT! THE WAR'S OVER! THEY SIGNED THE PEACE TREATY ALMOST TWO WEEKS AGO* SO NOBODY WILL SUSPECT US!
* SEPTEMBER 3, 1783 FOR YOU HISTORY BUFFS. QUESTION: WHAT WAR? AND WHAT TREATY?
IF IT WEREN'T FOR HIM--THE AMERICAN COLONIES WOULD STILL BELONG TO ENGLAND!
RIGHT! AMERICA WON ITS INDEPENDENCE BUT HE WON'T BE AROUND TO ENJOY IT!
I'M HERE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF THAT LEAKY PROFESSOR BELLIGHT OUT OF THIS YEAR. BUT SOMEHOW I ALWAYS SEEM TO GET SIDETRACKED ON MY TIME POOL VISITS--AND THIS ONE IS NO EXCEPTION!
I CERTAINLY CAN'T LET ANYONE BE KILLED. IF I CAN HELP IT! HMMM... I'LL BET I'LL TAKE A CONTRAPTION AND SEE WHAT I CAN REMEMBER ABOUT THIS YEAR

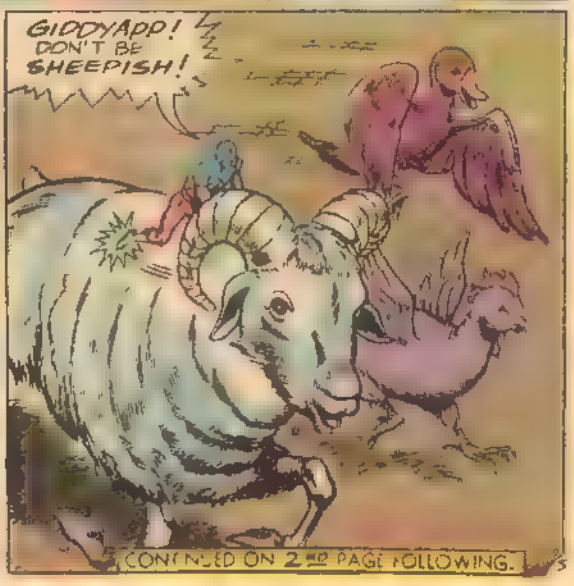

FIRST OF ALL, 1783 WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR BALLOONS. INVENTED BY TWO BROTHERS, JOSEPH AND ETIENNE MONTGOLFIER, AT ANNONAY, FRANCE IN JUNE 1783 THE VERY FIRST BALLOON OF PAPER AND LINEN SOARED ALOFT FOR A TEN-MINUTE FLIGHT! DURING THAT SUMMER THESE AERO-STATIC MACHINES WERE ALL THE RAGE. EVEN THE KING AND QUEEN WANTED TO WITNESS A DEMONSTRATION.

SOMETIME IN SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR, THEIR MAJESTIES--LOUIS XVI AND MARIE ANTOINETTE--ARE TO ATTEND JUST SUCH A "LAUNCH"! I BET THE BALLOON THAT GRABBED ME AS I CAME THROUGH THE TIME POOL WAS A TEST BALLOON TO SEARCH OUT THE UPPER AIR CURRENTS!
YOU WIN YOUR BET, ATOM!

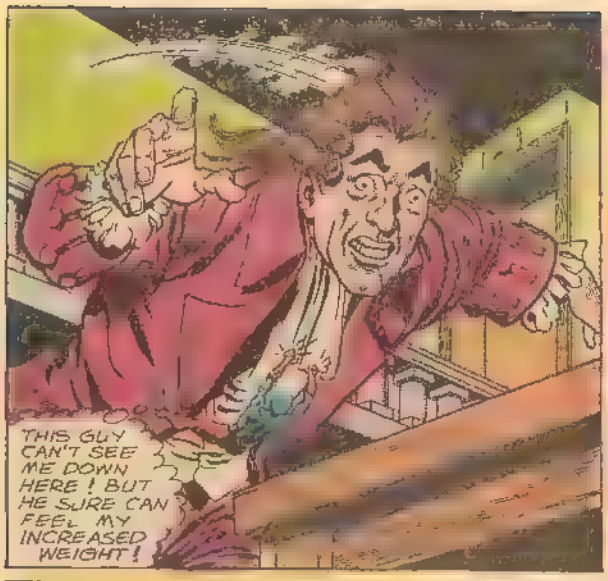
SOON THE TWO CONSPIRATORS ARE GALLOPING OUT OF PARIS ALONG A COUNTRY ROAD TOWARD PASSY...
IRONICALLY ENOUGH, IN THE CARRIAGE THEY'RE PASSING ARE THE MONTGOLFIER BROTHERS--DESTINED TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN HISTORY--AND IN THIS STORY!


SWINGING DOWN FROM THE SADDLES THEY PUSH OPEN THE LOWER WINDOWS OF A MANSION...
HE WILL BE SLEEPING UPSTAIRS. THIS SHOULD BE EASY.
TOO EASY! GOT TO DO SOMETHING FAST--YET NOT REVEAL MY PRESENCE! SNIFF! UNLESS MY NOSE DECEIVES ME, THERE'S A BARNYARD NEARBY!


ABANDONING HIS POSITION ON THE TRICORNE HAT, THE TINY TITAN RIDES THE WIND CURRENTS UNTIL...
A SHEEP! A DUCK! A ROOSTER! GOOD! YOU THREE SHALL BE MY SECRET WEAPON AGAINST THOSE WOULD-BE KILLERS!


GIDDYAPP! DON'T BE SHEEPISH!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

SO IT IS THAT--AS THE MEN BENT ON MURDER STEAL ACROSS THE GREAT HALL OF THE MANSION--THE FRONT DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND...
AWWK!
BAAAAH
HUH?
WHO LET THOSE ANIMALS LOOSE?
CHARGE!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS BLOKE PERSONALLY!
BOW
TO ONE SIDE, SHARP BEAKS NIP THE ANKLES OF THE SECOND INTRUDER...
HE'S TRAINED THESE BARNYARD ANIMALS TO BE HIS WATCH-DOGS! OWTCH! OWW! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE...
CLICKING HIS SIZE-AND-WEIGHT CONTROLS, THE ATOM IS WAFTED TOWARD THE RE-TREATING FELON...
WHAT HAVE THESE CRITTERS GOT AGAINST US? WE NEVER DID ANYTHING TO THEM!

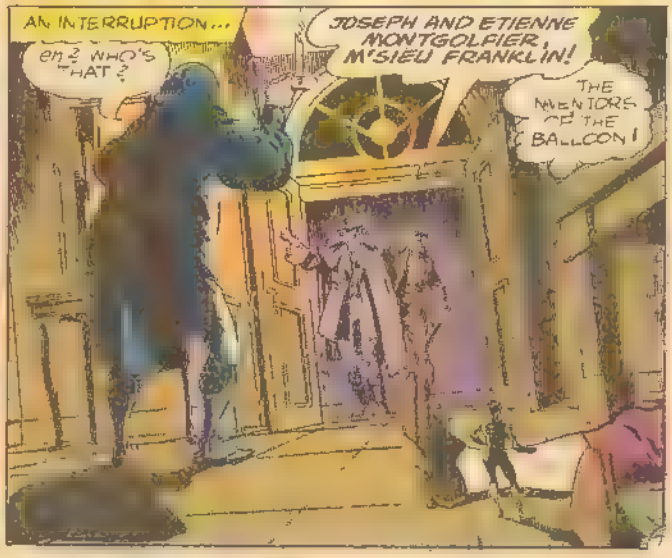

THIS GUY CAN'T SEE ME DOWN HERE! BUT HE SURE CAN FEEL MY INCREASED WEIGHT!

KLONK!

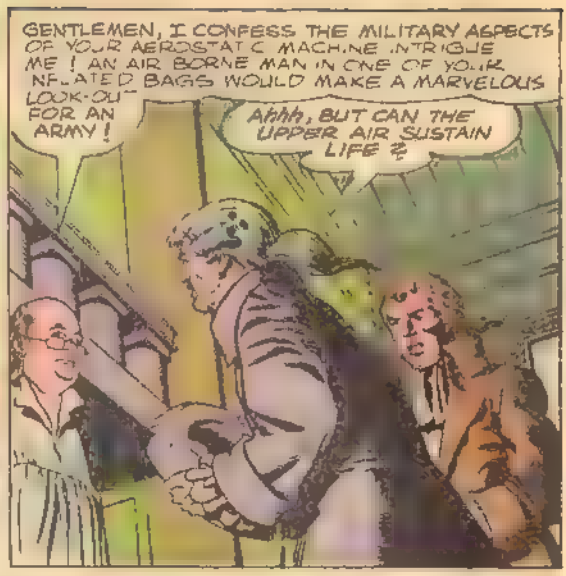
SURE ENOUGH--A CANDLEFLAME GLOWS--ILLUMINES THE HALL...
WHY--THAT'S BENJAMIN FRANKLIN! HE'S HERE IN FRANCE AFTER SIGNING THE PEACE TREATY--TRYING TO ARRANGE A LOAN FOR THE NEW-BORN UNITED STATES!
BLESS MY SOUL! IT'S TWO INTRUDERS! THEY MUST BE COMMON THIEVES!

FOOLISH MEN MAKE FEASTS--AND WISE MEN EAT THEM!
I MUST NOTIFY THE KING'S MEN TO TAKE THESE THIEVES INTO CUSTODY!

POOR BEN--HE DOESN'T SUSPECT THESE DISGRUNTLED MEN CAME TO KILL HIM FOR HIS PART IN WINNING FREEDOM FOR THE UNITED STATES! STILL... IF I HADN'T INTERFERED--SOMETHING ELSE WOULD HAVE SAVED HIM, FOR BEN'S DESTINED TO LIVE UNTIL 1790!


AN INTERRUPTION...
eh? WHO'S THAT?
JOSEPH AND ETIENNE MONTGOLFIER, M'SIEU FRANKLIN!
THE INVENTORS OF THE BALLOON!

M'SIEU FRANKLIN, KNOWING HOW INTERESTED YOU ARE IN OUR NEW INVENTION, THE AEROSTATIC MACHINE..
...WE CAME TO INVITE YOU TO ATTEND OUR "LAUNCH" WITH THEIR MAJESTIES ON THE NINETEENTH -- FOUR DAYS FROM NOW!


GENTLEMEN, I CONFESS THE MILITARY ASPECTS OF YOUR AEROSTATIC MACHINE INTRIGUE ME! AN AIR BORNE MAN IN ONE OF YOUR INFLATED BAGS WOULD MAKE A MARVELOUS LOOK-OUT FOR AN ARMY!
Ahhh, BUT CAN THE UPPER AIR SUSTAIN LIFE?

WHY NOT FIND OUT? I SUGGEST YOU SEND ANIMALS ALOFT IN A CAGE ATTACHED TO YOUR INVENTION! IF THEY SURVIVE -- MAN CAN SURVIVE AN AERIAL ASCENT!
AN EXCELLENT SUGGESTION, BUT WHAT ANIMALS CAN WE USE?

WHY NOT THAT SHEEP, ROOSTER AND DUCK WHOSE VALIANT EFFORTS PREVENTED ME FROM BEING ROBBED THIS NIGHT! THEY SHALL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS THE VERY FIRST AERIALISTS!
BEN'S A GOOD PROPHET! THOSE ANIMALS ARE INDEED GOING TO BE THE WORLD'S FIRST AERIALISTS! BUT SO AM I -- AS A STOWAWAY!

WHAT A THRILL -- TO BE THE "FIRST" HUMAN TO RIDE IN A BALLOON! I'LL GO ALONG WITH THE MONTGOLFIER BROTHERS AND MAKE HISTORY -- EVEN IF IT'LL GO UNRECORDED!

NICE FIGURING, ATOM-- BUT YOU'VE OVERLOOKED AN HISTORICAL FACT--FOR AS THE MONTGOLFIER BROTHERS DRIVE BACK TO PARIS, A TERRIBLE STORM DELUGES THE CITY AND...

ETIENNE! OUR AEROSTATIC MACHINE-- RUINED!

THE BALLOON WHICH WAS TO HAVE PERFORMED FOR THEIR MAJESTIES ON SEPTEMBER 19, 1783--IS UTTERLY DESTROYED! ...*

THERE IS NO HOPE! IT HAS BEEN DESTROYED!

WITHOUT IT, WE MUST FAIL OUR MAJESTIES! WE ARE RUINED MEN!

*THIS IS THE HISTORICAL FACT THAT THREATENS TO BLITZ THE ATOM'S PLAN!

PERHAPS WE COULD BUILD A NEW BALLOON?

IN FOUR DAYS? C'EST IMPOSSIBLE! AND YET-- WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE! WE MUST MAKE THE ATTEMPT!

WHEN THE RAIN STOPS, THE BALLOON-BUILDING BROTHERS GET TO WORK...

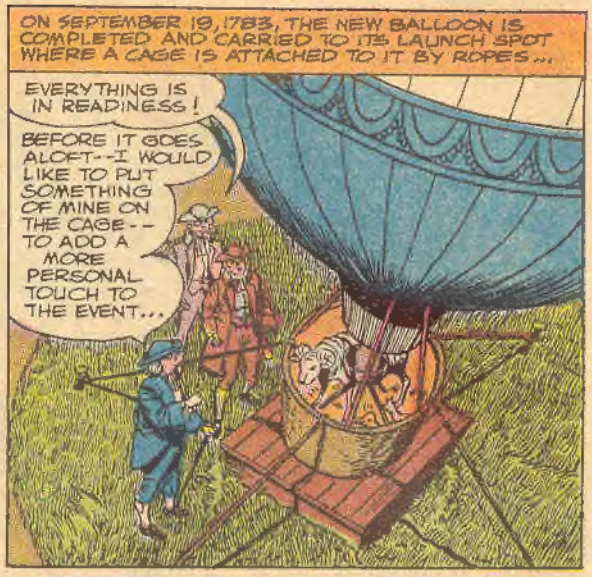
M'SIEU CHARLES, WHO SENT ALOFT AN AEROSTATIC MACHINE FILLED WITH HYDROGEN BACK IN AUGUST-- WILL HAVE THE LAUGH ON US UNLESS WE SUCCEED!

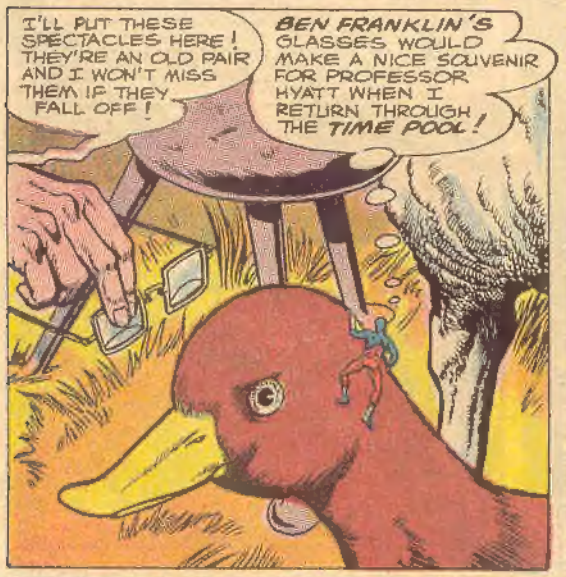
THAT WOULD BE THE PHYSICIST, PROFESSOR J.A.C. CHARLES! HIS BALLOON WAS CALLED A CHARLIERE!

ONE OF HIS SMALL-TEST MODELS CAUGHT ON FIRE AND APPARENTLY WAS BURNED UP! IT WAS NEVER FOUND AGAIN!

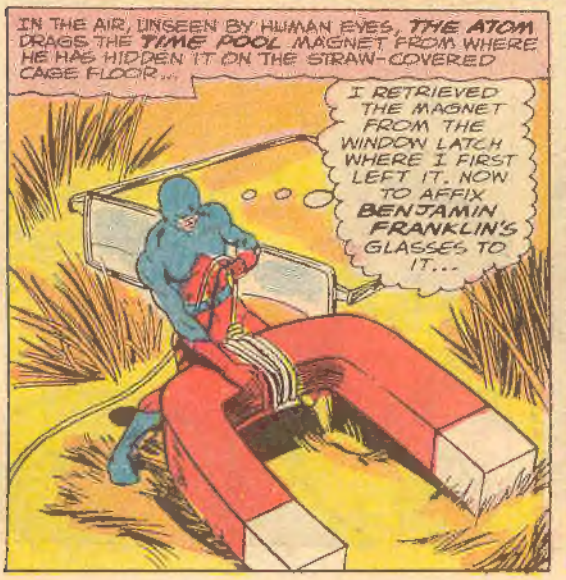
WHY--IT MUST HAVE BEEN CHARLES' BURNING MODEL-- BALLOON THE PROFESSOR DREW UP THROUGH THE TIME POOL! THAT EXPLAINS HOW HE CAUGHT "FIRE" WITH HIS MAGNET!

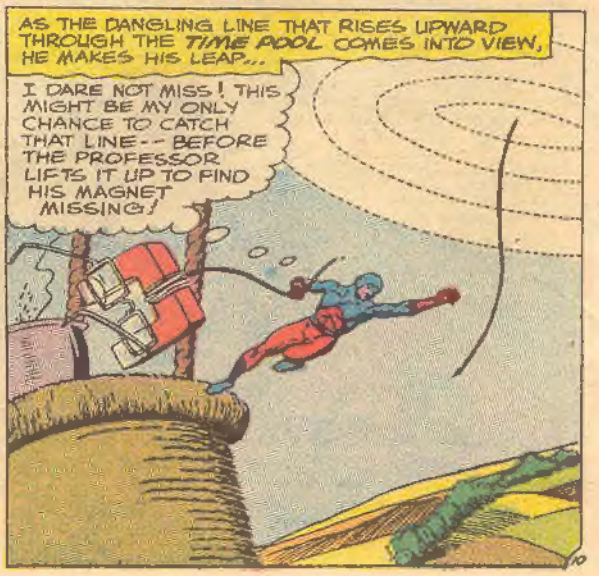
FROM TIME TO TIME JOSEPH AND ETIENNE MONTGOLFIER ARE AMAZED AT HOW FAST THEIR WORK IS PROGRESSING...
STRANGE! I KNOW I DIDN'T SEW THIS PART OF THE BALLOON! JOSEPH MUST HAVE DONE IT--EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T SEE HIM!
THAT'S ALL MY DOING--SECRETLY GIVING THEM A HELPING HAND!

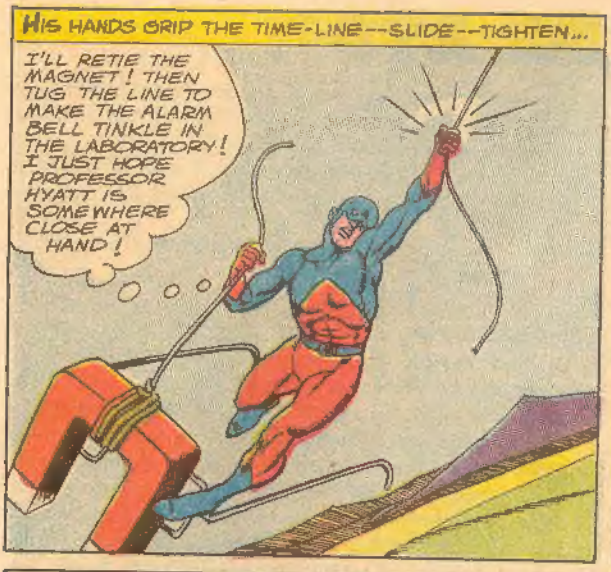

ON SEPTEMBER 19, 1783, THE NEW BALLOON IS COMPLETED AND CARRIED TO ITS LAUNCH SPOT WHERE A CAGE IS ATTACHED TO IT BY ROPES...
EVERYTHING IS IN READINESS!
BEFORE IT GOES ALOFT--I WOULD LIKE TO PUT SOMETHING OF MINE ON THE CAGE--TO ADD A MORE PERSONAL TOUCH TO THE EVENT...

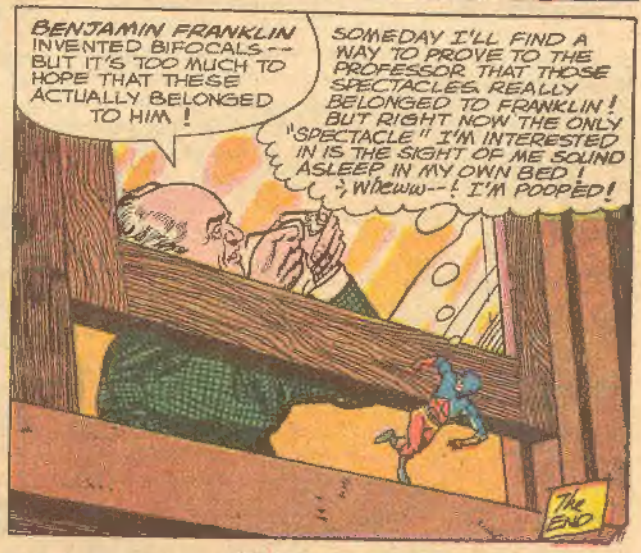

I'LL PUT THESE SPECTACLES HERE! THEY'RE AN OLD PAIR AND I WON'T MISS THEM IF THEY FALL OFF!
BEN FRANKLIN'S GLASSES WOULD MAKE A NICE SOUVENIR FOR PROFESSOR HYATT WHEN I RETURN THROUGH THE TIME POOL!

THE AEROSTATIC MACHINE RISES UPWARD INTO THE SKY OF FRANCE...
PAH--A MERE TOY! OF WHAT USE IS SUCH A THING, M'SIEU FRANKLIN?
OF WHAT USE IS A NEWLY BORN BABY, SIR?


IN THE AIR, UNSEEN BY HUMAN EYES, THE ATOM DRAGS THE TIME POOL MAGNET FROM WHERE HE HAS HIDDEN IT ON THE STRAW-COVERED CAGE FLOOR...
I RETRIEVED THE MAGNET FROM THE WINDOW LATCH WHERE I FIRST LEFT IT. NOW TO AFFIX BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S GLASSES TO IT...


AS THE DANGLING LINE THAT RISES UPWARD THROUGH THE TIME POOL COMES INTO VIEW, HE MAKES HIS LEAP...
I DARE NOT MISS! THIS MIGHT BE MY ONLY CHANCE TO CATCH THAT LINE--BEFORE THE PROFESSOR LIFTS IT UP TO FIND HIS MAGNET MISSING!





GREEN LANTERN

GOES ON THE GOLD STANDARD... AS A 24-KARAT VILLAIN TARNISHES THE EMERALD CRUSADER'S REPUTATION BY TURNING HIM INTO A-- SOLID GOLD LANTERN!

A FULL-LENGTH STORY WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD!

SUPERMAN DC NATIONAL COMICS

INSIDE THE ATOM

DEAR EDITOR:

On your letter page in *Atom* 25, you asked for comments on the lighter way Fox is writing. Putting it bluntly: it's lousy. But that *is* putting it bluntly, so I'll explain how I feel about it a little more gently.

Fox is a great writer, everyone knows that, but he is cheapening himself by writing in this "tongue-in-cheek" way. I read your comics, like *Flash, JLA*, and *The Atom*, because they're "solid" in story telling, straight to the point, no ridiculous humor. But what I've read in *Atom* 25 is mostly corn, and I mean *corn!* It really detracts from the story and drags your mag down something fierce. *Atom*, as a character, was not meant to be coupled with humor. He is a man doing a man's work and the corny humor just doesn't fit!

I hope I've given you good enough reasons for my feelings, and I hope that Fox will discontinue writing stories with the humor evinced in *Atom* 25.

—Dianne Hruska, Walled Lake, Mich.

(For this issue's lettercol, we've culled a representative sampling of the jeers and cheers that greeted the introduction of gaggy asides in *The Atom*. While there was no overwhelming reader consensus one way or the other, the resounding noises made by the slapper-downers all but drowned out those of the applause-clappers. Accordingly, the gags—as of the next issue—will be muffled, leaving only the echo of hollow laughter.—*Editor*)

****

DEAR EDITOR:

Atom 25 was a milestone in Gar Fox's career. His little side remarks make the story. Let's see more of this type of writing. I've never been more surprised by a Fox story than the two in this issue.

Though I usually like Fox stories, I have found his captions over almost every panel distracting. He usually manages to take away from the action of a fight scene with these captions. Fortunately, in this issue, this was *not* the case!

Nothing more can be said about the Kane-Greene team that hasn't already been said. They're great!

I found issue 25 to be one of the best *Atom* issues in a long time. Please have Gar Fox keep his tongue-in-cheek!

—Wayne DeWald, Hileah, Fla.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

The so-called lighter vein in which Gardner Fox wrote "The Man in the Ion Mask" and "The Spy Who Went Out for the Gold" was absolutely unnecessary. Both stories had marvelous plots but, in each case, they were cluttered with trivial, ridiculous little bits of what I suppose was meant to be humor. I've always considered DC's main strength to be the straightforward realism which appears in every story. As far as I'm concerned, the humor was totally unnecessary and I hope we don't have to be confronted with it in future issues.

—Don Fitzgerald, Tulsa, Okla.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

The "lighter vein" in which Gardner Fox told the stories in *Atom* 25 was great. The humorous footnotes improved the scripts immensely, giving *The Atom* a more human appearance.

Of the two tales, "The Spy Who Went Out for the Gold," was the better. The idea of the deadly gold was a little far-out, but I enjoyed the superbly written story by Gardner Fox. The cover was good, but I noticed that an awful lot of the people's eyes made the characters look as if they were in a trance. The picture of Jean, panel 2, page 3, is a good example. Other than this Gil and Sid get an A+ rating for their art.

—Richard Volbrecht, Groton, N.Y.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

What's the big idea? Whatever possessed Gardner Fox to mar such a fine comic as *The Atom* with his ridiculous cracks? *Atom* 25 was a bit too much. Plot-wise, both stories were up to par. But all those insidious little comments sprinkled throughout the stories spoiled the effect. To fully appreciate the impact, I actually had to scribble out every needless remark and read the works again. The result was a somewhat familiar style of writing, but it lacked the usual tense excitement. I do believe more time was devoted to the lighter side of what *The Atom* stands for, thus leaving little time for your usual painstaking refinement of the fine code your readers have come to expect. Mark one firm vote against this sillier mode of portraying *The Atom*.

—Marcy Slyh, Lansdale, Pa.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

Mr. Fox was foxy in *Atom* 25. Let him write more of his stories in this way. If he did, it will mark a new style in comic mags; mark my words!

—Jon Voss, Mclean, Neb.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

Brother, you don't know what I went through to write this letter! I enjoyed *Atom* 25. Boy, it had gags galore! Like in "The Man in the Ion Mask," page 5, panel 14, you have Ray thinking—"If I happen to be around when he robs again," and the comment: "Is Ray kidding? If that doesn't happen, poof! There goes our story!" Keep up the good gags!

—Randy Cleveland, Houston, Tex.

****

DEAR EDITOR:

What have you done? Why did you do it? This is a crime! This is terrible!

Atom 25 was one of the best issues to date but it was ruined by Gardner Fox's comical style. In both stories the artwork was superb, unmatched. The plots were equally good. Unfortunately, the excellence of these two stories was shattered by Fox's style. His joking stole the seriousness from the issue and destroyed its value.

For the sake of *The Atom*, have Gardner Fox cease his comical style and return to his usual serious excellence.

—Bill Abboud, Kansas City, Mo.

****

Please address communications to INSIDE THE ATOM. National Periodical Publications, 575 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York, 10022.